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THE LAY OF THE NIBELUNGS



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Nibelungenlied

THE LAY OF THE NIBELUNGS

METRICALLY TRANSLATED FROM
THE OLD GERMAN TEXT
BY ALICE HORTON
AND EDITED BY EDWARD BELL, M.A.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED THE ESSAY
ON THE NIBELUNGEN LIED BY
THOMAS CARLYLE

PRINTED BY GEORGE BELL AND SONS
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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE following addition to the existing translations of the Nibelungenlied originated in the desire to place before English readers a rendering which should be at once literal and metrical. Of five which have appeared during the past fifty years not one quite accomplishes this object. Three only are in verse. The first, by Jonathan Birch, which appeared in 1848, was rendered in iambics of seven feet, from the short and to some extent hypothetical text of Lachmann. The second, by W. N. Lettsom, is a spirited performance, but it takes many liberties with the language and fails to preserve the antique flavour of the work. The third, by Mr. A. G. Foster-Barham, which appeared only ten years ago, is much more satisfactory in this respect, and errs chiefly in retaining too great a roughness of rhythm, which makes it displeasing to the modern ear. Of the two prose translations, the first, entitled "Echoes from Mistland" (Chicago, 1877), by Mr. Auber Forestier, is rather a paraphrase than a literal rendering, though it adheres closely to the matter of the original; and the second, by Miss Armour, which has only lately appeared, seems in all respects a praiseworthy production, lacking only a metrical form to make it a fair equivalent of the great German epic.

The additional difficulties involved in any verse-translation are

so great, that a translator may well be excused from facing them. Assuming the indispensable qualification of sympathy needful in the translation of any work of art from one medium to another, the differences in word-formation, in inflexion, and in grammatical construction between any two languages interpose mechanical obstacles which are inconsistent with the preservation of metrical similarity; a more or less close approximation is all that can be looked for. Still more are the difficulties increased when the task involves the presentation to a modern reader of a work which belongs to a distant and nebulous past, deals with a primitive and imperfect phase of human culture, and teems with motives which, if not eradicated from human nature, are no longer regarded as legitimate and are often repugnant to modern ideas. In these circumstances it might be thought that a prose rendering would have the best or only chance of doing justice to the original. But, on the other hand, it may be urged that a prose translation of a rhymed poem can never be an adequate equivalent, especially in a work like the *Nibelungenlied*, where it must be obvious to any student that its construction in rhyme and strophe have played an important part in determining its style and character. Rhyme and rhythm are essential features of it; and the modern reader (as distinguished from the student) requires, no less than the mediæval listener, the stimulus which they supply. To give for 9,000 lines of verse a corresponding quantity of prose seems—apart from considerations of verbal accuracy—to fail in doing due justice to the poem.

So at least the translator and editor, who are jointly responsible, have thought; though, at the same time, they have been fully alive to the necessity of a close adherence to the text. They are of the opinion of Dryden, as expressed in the preface to his version of Ovid's *Epistles*, that it is the business of a translator,

as it is of a portrait painter, to make his work resemble the original. On this principle they have striven not to yield to the tempting idea—too often a delusion—that by sacrificing the letter they may preserve the spirit. On the contrary, they have thought that, in such a case as this, the letter and spirit are in a large measure inseparable. With, therefore, no small expenditure of trouble, they have tried, with what success the reader must judge, to reproduce in suitable English the matter, manner, and metre of the original.

With regard to the language, no futile attempt has been made by archaisms to give the translation the appearance of an antique. The object has been to put English readers, as far as possible, in the same position as the German who reads the work in one of the several modern German versions. At the same time it is obvious that much of what forms the English of to-day is not a suitable vehicle for the primitive ideas and manners illustrated in the poem. The translators have therefore tried to avoid words of merely modern use, and to adhere to English which is familiar to everyone in the Bible, or in the older Ballad literature, and is, at the same time, not out of harmony with a work which places the reader in an atmosphere far removed from that of the Victorian era.

Some latitude must also be allowed in respect to the metre. The rhythmical system of the original depends on accent rather than on time or measure. Opinions may differ as to the amount of accent to be given to lines like the following, which is a nearly normal stanza :

Nu wáren óuch die géste ze róssen álle kómen.
vil mánic ríchiu tjóste durch súlde wárt genómen.
daz vélt begónde stóuben sám ob ál daz lánt
mit loúge wære enbrúnnen : da wúrdén héldé wól bekánt.

Stanza 596.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

The rhythm of the original belongs with a central caesura; the metre is a dactyl verse and much used by Macaulay in his well-known "Lays." This form accordingly has been chosen as the nearest equivalent: though, for the sake of symmetry, the line which characterizes the second half of the poem has been somewhat limited in the translation. How far the translation of the original is justifiable the reader may judge by turning to the specimens given by Carlyle, and comparing them with the English versions.

As the first English version in the volume this Essay of the author's remains though it was written more than sixty years after the poem had attracted but little attention, it gives in an interesting manner, not in a style full of characteristic humour, a picture of the relations between this poem and other German literature of the time. So far as the authorship of the poem as it now exists, nothing can be known. It must, however, be remembered by any careful reader that the poem is not in its original form. The references to events not accounted for in the poem that it is based on earlier legends. The strange juxtaposition of ethical maxims: the contrast of ideals, as shown in the characters of Siegfried and Rüdiger: the mingling of historical personages of different dates show that in its earliest form as a whole it must have been a collection of anachronisms, due to the fusion of different elements. It has to some extent been elucidated by the increase of Scandinavian literature. The Eddas and other sources in a different form the ancient legends on which the poem are based. In the "Vol-

story of Siegfried and the obscure reference to the Scandinavian form

of the widely-spread legend of Theodoric, differing little from the version found in the German epic. But inasmuch as the former, no less than the latter, is generally admitted to be of Teutonic origin, however much infused with Scandinavian mythology, we have not come much nearer to the ultimate sources of the mythical, as distinguished from the historical, elements of the story.

Lachmann, one of the earliest editors of the *Nibelungenlied*, went so far as to analyze it into twenty different legends, rejecting on various grounds more than one-third of what is here given. Between that phase and the last, it is evident that there are several stages in which the poem existed as a whole. It is known that, at the request of Bishop Pilgrim of Passau in the tenth century, the story was translated into Latin prose by Conrad, called "The Scribe," and to him is attributed the inclusion of the name of the said bishop as that of an actor in events which, so far as they are historical, belong to the fifth century. After Conrad's time there may have been several augmented German editions before the twelfth century, to which our version belongs. There are more than twenty extant MSS., of which, however, only three are regarded as having any independent authenticity. They are designated as "A," "B," and "C"; of which the first, used by Lachmann, is the shortest, but betrays fewest signs of deviation from an older and good version. "C," on the contrary, is said to be considerably altered, from an earlier popular form, to suit the taste of a later period of culture. The remaining, fine MS. preserved in the monastery of St. Gall—is intermediate in length, and, retaining as it does many stanzas of great value, has become what may be called the *textus* of the edition. Edited by Bartsch it is the basis of the present edition. A facsimile of one of the pages from Dr. Otto

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE ... is a masterpiece
... the ... the ... questions
... the ... the ... works of
... the ... the ... translations
... the ... the ... Prof Ker on
... the ... the ... account of
... the ... the ... versions of
... the ... the ... book, entitled
... the ... the ... L. Weston.

ON THE NIBELUNGEN LIED

BY

THOMAS CARLYLE.¹

IN the year 1757, the Swiss Professor Bodmer printed an ancient poetical manuscript, under the title of "Chriemhilden Rache und die Klage" (Chriemhilde's Revenge, and the Lament); which may be considered as the first of a series, or stream of publications and speculations still rolling on, with increased current, to the present day. Not, indeed, that all these had their source or determining cause in so insignificant a circumstance; their source, or rather thousand sources, lay far elsewhere. As has often been remarked, a certain antiquarian tendency in literature, a fonder, more earnest looking back into the Past, began about that time to manifest itself in all nations (witness our own "Percy's Reliques"): this was among the first distinct symptoms of it in Germany; where, as with ourselves, its manifold effects are still visible enough.

Some fifteen years after Bodmer's publication, which, for the rest, is not celebrated as an editorial feat, one C. H. Müller undertook a "Collection of German Poems from the Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Centuries;" wherein, among other articles, he reprinted Bodmer's "Chriemhilde" and "Klage," with a highly remarkable addition prefixed to the former, essential indeed to the right understanding of it; and the whole now stood before the world as one Poem, under the name of the "Nibelungen Lied," or Lay of the Nibelungen. It has since

¹ [Originally published in the "Westminster Review," No. 29 (1831), as a review of Karl Simrock's modern German translation of the poem.—ED.]

been ascertained that the 'Klage' is a foreign interior appendage: it best, treated only as epilogue to the main work: meanwhile, not in this 'Nibelungen,' such as it was, there soon processed new inquiries and kindred enterprises. For much as the Poem, in the shape it here bore, was defaced and marred, it failed not to attract observation to all open-minded lovers of poetry, especially where a strong patriotic feeling existed, the singular antique 'Nibelungen' was an interesting appearance. Johannes Müller, in his famous 'Swiss History,' spoke of it in warm terms: subsequently, August Wilhelm Schlegel, through the medium of the 'Deutsche Museum,' succeeded in awakening something like a universal popular feeling on the subject; and, as a natural consequence, a whole host of Editors and Critics, of deep and of shallow understanding, whose labours we yet see in progress. The 'Nibelungen' has now been investigated, translated, collated, commented upon, with more or less result, to almost boundless lengths: besides the Work named at the head of this Paper, and which stands there simply as one of the latest, we have Versions into the modern tongue by Von der Hagen, by Einsberg, Lachmann, Bischoff, Zeune, the last in Prose, and said to be worthless; Criticisms, Introductions, Keys, and so forth, by innumerable others, of whom we mention only Docen and the brothers Grimm.

For means, not only has the Poem itself been elucidated by a mass of researches, but its whole environment has been thrown into new light: the scene and personages it relates to, the customs and traditions connected with it, have attained to a new permanence and coherence. Manuscripts, that for ages had been locked up, have issued from their archives into public view; and the old legends, that had been used only in mean guise for the amusement of the vulgar, have become important, not to one or two virtuosos, but to the learned: and now a whole System of Germanic and Mythology unfolds itself, shedding a new, though feeble and uncertain glimmer over the total darkness of the old Time. No fewer than

Fourteen ancient Traditionary Poems, all strangely intertwined, and growing out of and into one another, have come to light among the Germans; who now, in looking back, find that they too, as well as the Greeks, have their Heroic Age, and round the old Valhalla, as their Northern Pantheon, a world of demi-gods and wonders.

Such a phenomenon, unexpected till of late, cannot but interest a deep-thinking, enthusiastic people. For the "Nibelungen" especially, which lies as the centre and distinct keystone of the whole too chaotic System,—let us say rather, blooms as a firm sunny island in the middle of these cloud-covered, ever-shifting sand-whirlpools,—they cannot sufficiently testify their love and veneration. Learned professors lecture on the "Nibelungen" in public schools, with a praiseworthy view to initiate the German youth in love of their fatherland; from many zealous and nowise ignorant critics we hear talk of a "great Northern Epos," of a "German Iliad;" the more saturnine are shamed into silence, or hollow mouth-homage: thus from all quarters comes a sound of joyful acclamation; the "Nibelungen" is welcomed as a precious national possession, recovered after six centuries of neglect, and takes undisputed place among the sacred books of German literature.

Of these curious transactions some rumour has not failed to reach us in England, where our minds, from their own antiquarian disposition, were willing enough to receive it. Abstracts and extracts of the "Nibelungen" have been printed in our language; there have been disquisitions on it in our Reviews: hitherto, however, such as nowise to exhaust the subject. On the contrary, where so much was to be told at once, the speaker might be somewhat puzzled where to begin: it was a much readier method to begin with the end, or with any part of the middle, than like Hamilton's Ram (whose example is too little followed in literary narrative) to begin with the beginning. Thus has our stock of intelligence come rushing out on us quite promiscuously and pellmell; whereby the whole matter could not but acquire a

↑

...the most dreary
...find them-
...where they are obliged to
...that, except by
...Such a position
...is not less bright and
...the right one.
...is somewhat mended by
...intensely read the
...achievement,
...that he did not
...and what were still
...the secret
...layers of
...may be work,
...and critic; but to
...visibly above
...is what any

...to our
...mighty maze
...some pleasant pro-
...what we have called
...of antique
...grounds; nay if
...assigned them,
...as well as to the

...to venture rashly, or farther than
...that same traditional chaos, fondly named the
...with its Fourteen Sectors (or
...which are rather Fourteen shoreless Limbos,
...containing "a hundred thousand verses,"
...as of a quite natural affair! How
...country; by what art discover the little

grain of Substance that casts such multiplied immeasurable Shadows? The primeval Mythus, were it at first philosophical truth, or were it historical incident, floats too vaguely on the breath of men: each successive Singer and Redactor furnishes it with new personages, new scenery, to please a new audience; each has the privilege of inventing, and the far wider privilege of borrowing and new-modelling from *all* that have preceded him. Thus though tradition may have but one root, it grows like a Banian, into a whole overarching labyrinth of trees. Or rather might we say, it is a Hall of Mirrors, where in pale light each mirror reflects, convexly or concavely, not only some real Object, but the Shadows of this in other mirrors; which again do the like for it: till in such reflection and re-reflection the whole immensity is filled with dimmer and dimmer shapes; and no firm scene lies round us, but a dislocated, distorted chaos, fading away on all hands, in the distance, into utter night. Only to some brave Von der Hagen, furnished with indefatigable ardour, and a deep, almost religious love, is it given to find sure footing there, and see his way. All those *Dukes of Aquitania*, therefore, and *Etsel's Court-holdings*, and *Dietrichs* and *Sigenots* we shall leave standing where they are. Such as desire farther information will find an intelligible account of the whole Series or Cycle, in Messrs. Weber and Jamieson's "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities;" and all possible furtherance, in the numerous German works above alluded to; among which Von der Hagen's writings, though not the readiest, are probably the safest guides. But for us, our business here is with the "Nibelungen," the inhabited poetic country round which all these wildernesses lie; only as environments of which, as routes to which, are they of moment to us. Perhaps our shortest and smoothest route will be through the "Heldenbuch" (Hero-book); which is greatly the most important of these subsidiary Fictions, not without interest of its own, and closely related to the "Nibelungen." This "Heldenbuch," therefore, we must now address ourselves to traverse with all despatch. At the present stage of the business too, we shall forbear any

historical inquiry and argument concerning the date and local habitation of those Traditions: reserving what little is to be said on that matter till the Traditions themselves have become better known to us. Let the reader, on this for the present, transport himself into the twelfth or thirteenth century; and therefrom looking back into the sixth or fifth, see what presents itself.

Of the "Heldenbuch," tried on its own merits, and except as illustrating that other far worthier Poem, or at most as an old national, and still in some measure popular book, we should have felt strongly inclined to say, as the Curate in "Don Quixote" so often did, *Al corral con ello*, Out of the window with it! Doubtless there are touches of beauty in the work, and even a sort of heartiness and antique quaintness in its wildest follies; but on the whole that George-and-Dragon species of composition has long ceased to find favour with anyone; and except for its groundwork, more or less discernible, of old Northern Fiction, this "Heldenbuch" has little to distinguish it from these. Nevertheless, what is worth remark, it seems to have been a far higher favourite than the "Nibelungen" with ancient readers: it was printed soon after the invention of printing; some think in 1472, for there is no place or date on the first edition; at all events, in 1491, in 1509, and repeatedly since; whereas the "Nibelungen," though written earlier, and in worth immeasurably superior, had to remain in manuscript three centuries longer. From which, for the thousandth time, inferences might be drawn as to the infallibility of popular taste, and its value as a criterion for poetry. However, it is probably in virtue of this neglect, that the "Nibelungen" boasts of its actual purity; that it now comes before us as more beautiful and graceful as it issued from the old Singer's head, than it ever was, when surrounded with Ass-eared Giants, Fiery Dragons, and other such things, as the "Heldenbuch" is, and which, we should hope, may be the produce of a later, the *Swabian Era*, to which these poems, as the *Nibelungen* are commonly referred. Indeed, one Casper

von Roen is understood to have passed the whole "Heldenbuch" through his limbec, in the fifteenth century; but like other rectifiers, instead of purifying it, to have only drugged it with still fiercer ingredients to suit the sick appetite of the time.

Of this drugged and adulterated "Hero-book" (the only one we yet have, though there is talk of a better) we shall quote the long Title-page of Lessing's Copy, the edition of 1560; from which, with a few intercalated observations, the reader's curiosity may probably obtain what little satisfaction it wants:

Das Heldenbuch, welchs auffs new corrigirt und gebessert ist, mit schönen Figuren geziert. Gedrückt zu Frankfurt am Mayn, durch Weygand Han und Sygmund Feyerabend, etc. That is to say:

"The 'Hero-book,' which is of new corrected and improved, adorned with beautiful Figures. Printed at Frankfurt on the Mayn, through Weygand Han and Sygmund Feyerabend.

"*Part First* saith of Kaiser Ottnit and the little King Elberich, how they with great peril, over sea, in Heathendom, won from a king his daughter (and how he in lawful marriage took her to wife)."

From which announcement the reader already guesses the contents: how this little King Elberich was a Dwarf or Elf, some half-span long, yet full of cunning practices, and the most helpful activity; nay, stranger still, had been Kaiser Ottnit of *Lampartei* or Lombardy's father,—having had his own ulterior views in that indiscretion. How they sailed with Messina ships,  land; fought with that unspeakable Turk, King  and about his fortress and metropolis of Montebur, stuck round with christian heads; slew from seventy thousand of the Infidels at one heat; saw the lady  ments; and at length, chiefly by Dwarf Elberich's  er off in triumph; wedded her in Messina; and  ty, rooting out the Mahometan prejudice, con- the creed of Mother Church. The fair runaway been of a gentle tractable disposition, very different

from old Wackelbal; concerning whom it is here chiefly noted that Dwarf Eberich, rendering himself invisible on first interview, plucks out a handful of hair from his chin; the increasing to a tenfold pitch the royal choler; and, what is more remarkable, furnishing the poet Wieland, six cent afterwards, with the critical incident in his "Oberon." As the young lady herself, we cannot but admit that she was worth sailing to Rastenburg for; and shall here, as our specimen of that old German doggerel, give the description of as she first appeared on the battlements during the fight; joining a version as verbal and literal as the plainest prose make it. Considered as a detached passage, it is perhaps finest we have met with in the "Heldenbock."

*Der herr braun als schnee,
Roth als die rot wolke,
Glück der ritter were
Gefeh der engeln schick.
Sich hat die mayer reit
Mit ruten wold hiltail
Und auch mit herin kint;
Nimmst du bist die wold.*

*Sie war schön an dem leib,
Und so die reine schick;
Roth als die herbe schick
Weißpuckelgen hiltail;
Der herbe leib genier
Denn die gnetz nicht polack;
Der ritter wold und reit,
Das war mit derin kint.*

*Der her war schön
Mit noble silk (band) fine;
She let it flow down,
The lovely maidling.
She wore a crown with jewels,
It was of gold so red;
The very small
Had need (to console*

Her heart burnt (with anxiety) :
Just as a red ruby, [bea
Like the full moon [s
Her eyes (eyelings, pretty eyes)
Herself had the maiden pure
Well adorned with roses,
And also with pearls small :
No one there comforted the mai

She was fair of body,
And in the waist slender ;
Right as a (golden) candlestick
Well-fashioned everywhere :
Her two hands proper,
So that she wanted nought :
Her little nails fair and pure,
That you could see yourself the

Her hair was beautifully girt
With noble silk (band) fine ;
She let it flow down,
The lovely maidling.
She wore a crown with jewels,
It was of gold so red :
The very small
Had need (to console

*Da vornen in den kronen
Lag ein karfunkelstein,
Der in dem pallast schonen
Aecht als ein kertz erschein ;
Auf jrem haupt das hare
War lauter und auch fein,
Es leuchtet also klare
Recht als der sonnen schein.*

There in front of the crown
Lay a carbuncle-stone,
Which in the palace fair
Even as a taper seemed ;
On her head the hair
Was glossy and also fine,
It shone as bright
Even as the sun's sheen.

*Die magt die stand alleine,
Gar trawrig war jr mut ;
Ihr farb und die war reine,
Lieblich we milch und blut ;
Her durch jr zöpfe reinen
Schien jr hals als der schnee :
Elberich dem viel kleinen
That der maget jammer weh.*

The maid she stood alone,
Right sad was her mind ;
Her colour it was pure,
Lovely as milk and blood :
Out through her pure locks
Shone her neck like the snow.
Elberich the very small
Was touched with the maiden's sorrow.

Happy man was Kaiser Ottnit, blessed with such a wife, after all his travail ;--had not the Turk Machabol cunningly sent him, in revenge, a box of young Dragons, or Dragon-eggs, by the hands of a caitiff Infidel, contriver of the mischief ; by whom in due course of time they were hatched and nursed, to the infinite woe of all Lampartei, and ultimately to the death of Kaiser Ottnit himself, whom they swallowed and attempted to digest, once without effect, but the next time too fatally, crown and all !

"Part Second announceth (*meldet*) of Herr Hugdietrich and his son Wolfdietrich ; how they, for justice-sake, oft by their doughty acts succoured distressed persons, with other bold heroes that stood by them in extremity."

Concerning which Hugdietrich, Emperor of Greece, and his son Wolfdietrich, one day the renowned Dietrich of Bern, we are say little more than that the former trained himself to stress-work ; and for many weeks plied his needle, before he got wedded and produce Wolfdietrich ; who coming into the world in this clandestine manner, was let down into the h, and like Romulus and Remus nursed by a Wolf, is name. However, after never-imagined adventures,

very beautiful and very wilful, boasts, in the pride of her heart, that no heroes on earth are to be compared with hers; and hearing accidentally that Dietrich of Bern has a high character in this line, forthwith challenges him to visit Worms, and with eleven picked men to do battle there against those other Twelve champions of Christendom that watch her Rose-garden. Dietrich, in a towering passion at the style of the message, which was "surly and stout," instantly pitches upon his eleven seconds, who also are to be principals, and with a retinue of other sixty thousand, by quick stages, in which obstacles enough are overcome, reaches Worms, and declares himself ready. Among these eleven Lombard heroes of his are likewise several whom we meet with again in the "Nibelungen"; beside Dietrich himself, we have the old Duke Hildebrand, Wolfhart, Ortwin. Notable among them, in another way, is Monk Ilsan, a truculent gray-bearded fellow, equal to any Friar Tuck in "Robin Hood."

The conditions of fight are soon agreed on: there are to be twelve successive duels, each challenger being expected to find his match; and the prize of victory is a Rose-garland from Chriemhild, and *ein Helssen und ein Küssen*, that is to say virtually, one kiss from her fair lips to each. But here as it ever should do, Pride gets a fall; for Chriemhild's bully-lectors are, in divers ways, all successively felled to the ground by the Berners; some of whom, as old Hildebrand, will not even take her Kiss when it is due: even Siegfried himself, most reluctantly engaged with by Dietrich, and for a while victorious, is at last forced to seek shelter in her lap. Nay, Monk Ilsan, after the regular fight is over, and his part in it well performed, calls out in succession fifty-two other idle Champions of the Garden, part of them Giants, and routs the whole fraternity; thereby earning, besides his own allowance, fifty-two spare Garlands, and fifty-two several kisses; in the course of which latter, Chriemhild's cheek, a just moment as seemed, was scratched to the drawing of blood by Monk Ilsan's beard. It only remains to be added, that King Gibich, Father, is now fain to do homage for his kingdom

to Dietrich ; who returns triumphant to his own country ; where also, Monk Ilsan, according to promise, distributes these fifty-two Garlands among his fellow Friars, crushing a garland on the bare crown of each, till "the red blood ran over their ears." Under which hard, but not undeserved treatment, they all agreed to pray for remission of Ilsan's sins : indeed, such as continued refractory he tied together by the beards, and hung pair-wise over poles, whereby the stoutest soon gave in.

So endeth here this ditty
Of strife from woman's pride ;
God on our griefs take pity,
And Mary still by us abide.

"In *Part Fourth* is announced (*gemelt*) of the little King Laurin, the Dwarf, how he encompassed his Rose-garden with so great manhood and art-magic, till at last he was vanquished by the heroes, and forced to become their Juggler, with etc., etc."

Of which Fourth and happily last part we shall here say nothing ; inasmuch as, except that certain of our old heroes again figure there, it has no coherence or connection with the rest of the "*Heldenbuch*" ; and is simply a new tale, which by way of episode Heinrich von Ofterdingen, as we learn from his own words, had subsequently appended thereto. He says :

Heinrich von Ofterdingen
This story hath been singing,
To the joy of Princes bold,
They gave him silver and gold,
Moreover pennies and garments rich :
Here endeth this Book the which
Doth sing our noble Heroes' story :
God help us all to heavenly glory.

Such is some outline of the famous "*Heldenbuch*" ; on which it is not our business here to add any criticism. The fact that it has so long been popular betokens a certain worth in it ; the kind and degree of which is also in some measure apparent. In poetry

"the rude man," it has been said, "requires only to see something going on; the man of more refinement wishes to feel; the truly refined man must be made to reflect." For the first of these classes our "Hero-book," as has been apparent enough, provides in abundance; for the other two scantily, indeed for the second not at all. Nevertheless our estimate of this work, which as a series of Antique Traditions may have considerable meaning, is apt to be too low. Let us remember that this is not the original "Heldenbuch" which we now see; but only a version of it into the Knight-errant dialect of the thirteenth, indeed partly of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with all the fantastic monstrosities, now so trivial, pertaining to that style; under which disguises the really antique earnest groundwork, interesting as old Thought, if not as old Poetry, is all but quite obscured from us. But Antiquarian diligence is now busy with the "Heldenbuch" also, from which what light is in it will doubtless be elicited, and here and there a deformity removed. Though the Ethiop cannot change his skin, there is no need that even he should go abroad unwashed.¹

Casper von Roen, or whoever was the ultimate redactor of the "Heldenbuch," whom Lessing designates as "a highly ill-informed man," would have done better had he quite omitted that little King Laurin, "and his little Rose-garden," which properly is no Rose-garden at all; and instead thereof introduced the "Gehörnte Siegfried" (Behorned Siegfried), whose history lies at the heart of the whole Northern Traditions; and, under a rude prose dress, is to this day a real child's-book and people's-book among the

Our inconsiderable knowledge of the "Heldenbuch" is derived from secondary sources; chiefly from Lessing's "Werke" (b. xlii.), where the reader will find an epitome of the whole Poem, with Extracts by Herr n, from which the above are taken. A still more accessible and, with long specimens translated into verse, stands in the "Northern Antiquities" (pp. 45-167). Von der Hagen has edited specially on the "Heldenbuch"; with what result w

...and the ... somewhat in
... much more
... indeed
... whether in Scan-
... or another,
... Blacksmith and
... we are sure to light
... the strange sort, and
... endeavour to
... so far indeed as
... in the main

... Horned, Be-
... was the loveliest as
... and had horns
... or even that
... was hard like a
... for the truth
... like that of
... All men
... as we here
... of Siegfried
... misfortune or
... he came into
... that happy period
... but by the sooty
... Here however, he
... quarrelling with his
... breaking the hardest anvils
... So that Mimer, other-
... could by no means do with him there.
... accordingly, to the neighbouring forest, to fetch
... that a monstrous Dragon, one Regin, the
... would meet him and devour him. But far
... Siegfried by main force slew this Dragon, or

rather Dragonized Smith's-Brother; made broth of him; and, warned by some significant phenomena, bathed therein; or, as others assert, bathed directly in the monster's blood, without cookery; and hereby attained that Invulnerability, complete in all respects, save that between his shoulders, where a lime-tree leaf chanced to settle and stick during the process, there was one little spot, a fatal spot as afterwards turned out, left in its natural state.

Siegfried, now seeing through the craft of the Smith, returned home and slew him; then set forth in search of adventures, the bare catalogue of which were long to recite. We mention only two, as subsequently of moment both for him and for us. He is by some said to have courted, and then jilted, the fair and proud Queen Brunhild of Isenland; nay to have thrown down the seven gates of her Castle; and then ridden off with her wild horse Gana, having mounted him in the meadow, and instantly broken him. Some cross passages between him and Queen Brunhild, who understood no jesting, there must clearly have been, so angry is her recognition of him in the "Nibelungen"; nay, she bears a lasting grudge against him there; as he, and indeed she also, one day too sorely felt.

His other grand adventure is with the two sons of the deceased King Nibelung, in Nibelungen-land: these two youths, to whom their father had bequeathed a Hoard or Treasure, beyond all price or computation, Siegfried, "riding by alone," found on the side of a mountain, in a state of great perplexity. They had brought out the Treasure from the cave where it usually lay; but how to part it was the difficulty; for, not to speak of gold, there were as many jewels alone "as twelve wagons in four days and nights, each going three journeys, could carry away;" nay, "however much you took from it, there was no diminution:" besides, in real property, a Sword, Balmung, of great potency; a Divining-rod, "which gave power over everyone;" and a *Tarnkappe* (or Cloak of Darkness), which not only rendered the wearer invisible, but also gave him twelve men's strength. So

that the two Princes Royal, without counsel save from their Twelve stupid Giants, knew not how to fall upon any amicable arrangement; and, seeing Siegfried ride by so opportunely, requested him to be arbiter; offering also the Sword Balmung for his trouble. Siegfried, who readily undertook the impossible problem, did his best to accomplish it; but, of course, without effect; nay the two Nibelungen Princes, being of choleric temper, grew impatient, and provoked him; whereupon, with the Sword Balmung he slew them both, and their Twelve Giants (perhaps originally Signs of the Zodiac) to boot. Thus did the famous *Nibelungen Hort* (Hoard), and indeed the whole Nibelungen-land, come into his possession: wearing the Sword Balmung, and having slain the two Princes and their Champions, what was there farther to oppose him? Vainly did the Dwarf Alberich, our old friend Elberich of the "Heldenbuch," who had now become special keeper of this Hoard, attempt some resistance with a Dwarf Army; he was driven back into the cave; plundered of his *Tarnkappe*; and obliged, with all his myrmidons, to swear fealty to the conqueror, whom indeed thenceforth he and they punctually obeyed.

Whereby Siegfried might now farther style himself King of the Nibelungen; master of the infinite Nibelungen Hoard (collected doubtless by art-magic in the beginning of Time, in the deep bowels of the Universe), with the *Wünschelruthe* (Wishing or Divining-rod) pertaining thereto; owner of the *Tarnkappe*, which he ever after kept by him, to put on at will; and though last not least, Bearer and Wielder of the Sword Balmung,¹ by the keen

¹ By this Sword Balmung also hangs a tale. Doubtless it was one of those invaluable weapons sometimes fabricated by the old Northern Smiths, compared with which our modern Foxes and Ferraras and Toledos are mere leaden tools. Von der Hagen seems to think it simply the Sword Mimung under another name; in which case Siegfried's old master, Mimer, had been the maker of it, and called it after himself, as if it had been his son. In Scandinavian chronicles, veridical or not, we have the following account of that transaction. Mimer (or, as some have it, surely without ground, one

edge of which all this gain had come to him. To which last acquisitions adding his previously acquired Invulnerability, and his natural dignities as Prince of Netherland, he might well show himself before the foremost at Worms or elsewhere; and attempt any the highest adventure that fortune could cut out for him. However, his subsequent history belongs all to the "Nibelungen Song"; at which fair garden of poesy we are now, through all these shaggy wildernesses and enchanted woods, finally arrived.

Apart from its antiquarian value, and not only as by far the finest monument of old German art; but intrinsically, and as a mere detached composition, this "Nibelungen" has an excellence that cannot but surprise us. With little preparation, any reader of poetry, even in these days, might find it interesting. It is not without a certain Unity of interest and purport, an internal coherence and completeness; it is a Whole, and some spirit of Music informs it: these are the highest characteristics of a true

Velint, once an apprentice of his) was challenged by another Craftsman, named Amilias, who boasted that he had made a suit of armour which no stroke could dint,—to equal that feat, or own himself the second Smith then extant. This last the stout Mimer would in no case do, but proceeded to forge the Sword Mimung; with which, when it was finished, he, "in presence of the King," cut asunder "a thread of wool floating on water." This would have seemed a fair fire-edge to most smiths: not so to Mimer; he sawed the blade in pieces, welded it in "a red-hot fire for three days," tempered it "with milk and oatmeal," and by much other cunning brought out a sword that severed "a ball of wool floating on water." But neither would this suffice him; he returned to his smithy, and by means known only to himself, produced, in the course of seven weeks, a third and final edition of Mimung, which split asunder a whole floating pack of wool. The comparative trial now took place forthwith. Amilias, cased in his impenetrable coat of mail, sat down on a bench, in presence of assembled thousands, and bade Mimer strike him. Mimer fetched of course his best blow, on which Amilias observed, that there was a strange feeling of cold iron in his inwards. "Shake thyself," said Mimer; the luckless wight did so, and fell in two halves, being cleft sheer through from collar to haunch, never more to swing hammer in this world. See "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities," p. 31

influenced the work done, these two Poems, could we trust our individual feeling, have in one respect the same poetical result for us: in the "Nibelungen" as in the "Gerusalemme," the persons and their story are indeed brought vividly before us, yet not near and palpably present; it is rather as if we looked on that scene through an inverted telescope, whereby the whole was carried far away into the distance, the life-large figures compressed into brilliant miniatures, so clear, so real, yet tiny, elf-like and beautified as well as lessened, their colours being now closer and brighter, the shadows and trivial features no longer visible. This, as we partly apprehend, comes of *singing* Epic Poems; most part of which only pretend to be sung. Tasso's rich melody still lives among the Italian people; the "Nibelungen" also is what it professes to be, a *Song*.

No less striking than the verse and language is the quality of the invention manifested here. Of the Fable, or narrative material of the "Nibelungen," we should say that it had high, almost the highest merit; so daintily yet firmly is it put together; with such felicitous selection of the beautiful, the essential, and no less felicitous rejection of whatever was unbeautiful or even extraneous. The reader is no longer afflicted with that chaotic brood of Fire-drakes, Giants, and malicious turbaned Turks, so fatally rife in the "Heldenbuch": all this is swept away, or only hovers in faint shadows afar off; and free field is open for legitimate perennial interests. Yet neither is the "Nibelungen" without its wonders; for it is poetry and not prose; here too, a supernatural world encompasses the natural, and, though at rare intervals and in calm manner, reveals itself there. It is truly wonderful, with what skill our simple untaught Poet deals with the marvellous; admitting it without reluctance or criticism, yet precisely in the degree and shape that will best avail him. Here, if in no other respect, we should say that he has a decided superiority to Homer himself. The whole story of the "Nibelungen" is fateful, mysterious, guided on by unseen influences; yet the actual marvels are few, and done in the far distance; those

Dwarfs, and Cloaks of Darkness, and charmed Treasure-caves, are heard of rather than beheld, the tidings of them seem to issue from unknown space. Vain were it to inquire where that Nibelungen-land specially is: its very name is *Nebel-land* or *Nið-land*, the land of Darkness, of Invisibility. The "Nibelungen Heroes" that muster in thousands and tens of thousands, though they march to the Rhine or Danube, and we see their strong limbs and shining armour, we could almost fancy to be children of the air. Far beyond the firm horizon, that wonder-bearing region swims on the infinite waters; unseen by bodily eye, or at most discerned as a faint streak, hanging in the blue depths, uncertain whether island or cloud. And thus the "Nibelungen Song," though based on the bottomless foundations of Spirit, and not unvisited of skyey messengers, is a real, rounded, habitable Earth, where we find firm footing, and the wondrous and the common live amicably together. Perhaps it would be difficult to find any Poet of ancient or modern times, who in this trying problem has steered his way with greater delicacy and success.

To any of our readers who may have personally studied the "Nibelungen," these high praises of ours will not seem exaggerated: the rest, who are the vast majority, must endeavour to accept them with some degree of faith, at least of curiosity; to vindicate, and judiciously substantiate them would far exceed our present opportunities. Nay in any case, the criticism, the alleged Characteristics of a Poem are so many Theorems, which are indeed enunciated, truly or falsely, but the Demonstration of which must be sought for in the reader's own study and experience. Nearly all that can be attempted here, is some hasty epitome of the mere Narrative; no substantial image of the work, but a feeble outline and shadow. To which task, as the personages and their environment have already been in some degree illustrated, we can now proceed without obstacle.

The "Nibelungen" has been called the Northern Epos; yet it has, in great part, a Dramatic character: those thirty-nine *Aventiuren* (Adventures), which it consists of, might be so many

scenes in a Tragedy. The catastrophe is dimly prophesied from the beginning; and, at every fresh step, rises more and more clearly into view. A shadow of coming Fate, as it were, a low inarticulate voice of Doom falls, from the first, out of that charmed Nibelungen-land: the discord of two women is as a little spark of evil passion, which ere long enlarges itself into a crime; foul murder is done; and now the Sin rolls on like a devouring fire, till the guilty and the innocent are alike encircled with it, and a whole land is ashes, and a whole race is swept away.

*Uns ist in alten mæren Wunders vil geseit,
Von helden lobebæren Von grozer chunheit;
Von vrouden und' hoch-geziten, Von weinen und von chlagen,
Von chunere rechen striten, Muget ir nu wunder hœren sagen.*

We find in ancient story Wonders many told,
Of heroes in great glory With spirit free and bold;
Of joyances and high-tides, Of weeping and of woe,
Of noble Recken striving, Mote ye now wonders know.

This is the brief artless Proem; and the promise contained in it proceeds directly towards fulfilment. In the very second stanza we learn:

*Es wuhs in Burgonden Ein vil edel magedin,
Das in allen landen Niht schoners mohte sin;
Chriemhilt was si geheien, Si wart ein schone wip;
Darumbe mûsen degene Vil verliesen den lip.*

A right noble maiden Did grow in Burgundy,
That in all lands of earth Nought fairer mote there be;
Chriemhild of Worms she hight, She was a fairest wife;
For the which must warriors A many lose their life.¹

¹ This is the first of a thousand instances in which the two inseparables, *wip* and *lip*, or in modern tongue *weib* and *leib*, as mentioned above, appear together. From these two opening stanzas of the "Nibelungen Lied," in its purest form, the reader may obtain some idea of the versification; it runs on in more or less regular Alexandrines, with a cæsural pause in each, where the capital letters occur; indeed, the lines seem originally to have been divided

• Chriemhild, this world's-wonder, a king's daughter and king's sister, and no less coy and proud than fair, dreams one night that "she had petted a falcon, strong, beautiful and wild; which two eagles snatched away from her: this she was forced to see; greater sorrow felt she never in the world." Her mother, Ute, to whom she relates the vision, soon redes it for her; the falcon is a noble husband, whom, God keep him, she must suddenly lose. Chriemhild declares warmly for the single state; as, indeed, living there at the Court of Worms, with her brothers, Gunther, Gernot, Giseler, "three kings noble and rich," in such pomp and renown, the pride of Burgunden-land and Earth, she might readily enough have changed for the worse. However, dame Ute bids her not be too emphatical; for "if ever she have heartfelt joy in life, it will be from man's love, and she shall be a fair wife (*wip*), when God sends her a right worthy Ritter's *lip*." Chriemhild is more in earnest than maidens usually are when they talk thus; it appears, she guarded against love, "for many a lief-long day;" nevertheless, she too must yield to destiny. "Honourably she was to become a most noble Ritter's wife." "This," adds the old Singer, "was that same falcon she dreamed of: how sorely she since revenged him on her nearest kindred! For that one death died full many a mother's son."

It may be observed, that the Poet here, and at all times, shows a marked partiality for Chriemhild; ever striving, unlike his fellow singers, to magnify her worth, her faithfulness and loveliness; and softening, as much as may be, whatever makes against her. No less a favourite with him is Siegfried, the prompt, gay, peaceably fearless hero; to whom, in the Second *Aventiure*, we

into two at that point, for sometimes, as in Stanza First, the middle words (*mæren, lobebæren; gesiten, striten*) also rhyme; but this is rather a rare case. The word *rechen* or *recken*, used in the First Stanza, is the constant designation for bold fighters, and has the same root with *rich* (thus in old French, *hommes riches*; in Spanish, *ricos hombres*), which last is here also synonymous with *powerful*, and is applied to kings, and even to the Almighty, *Got dem richen*.

are here suddenly introduced, at Santen (Xanten), the Court of Netherland; whither, to his glad parents, after achievements (to us partially known) "of which one might sing and tell forever," that noble prince has returned. "Much as he has done and conquered, he is but just arrived at man's years: it is on occasion of this joyful event that a high-tide (*hochgezeit*) is now held there, with infinite joustings, minstrelsy, largesses and other chivalrous doings, all which is sung with utmost heartiness. The old King Siegemund offers to resign his crown to him; but Siegfried has other game a-field: the unparalleled beauty of Chriemhild has reached his ear and his fancy; and now he will to Worms and woo her, at least "see how it stands with her." Fruitless is it for Siegemund and the mother Siegelinde to represent the perils of that enterprise, the pride of those Burgundian Gunthers and Gernots, the fierce temper of their uncle Hagen; Siegfried is as obstinate as young men are in these cases, and can hear no counsel. Nay he will not accept the much more liberal proposition, to take an army with him, and conquer the country, if it must be so; he will ride forth, like himself, with twelve champions only, and so defy the future. Whereupon, the old people finding that there is no other course, proceed to make him clothes;¹—at least, the good queen with "her fair women sitting night and day," and sewing, does so, the father furnishing noblest battle and riding gear;—and so dismiss him with many blessings and lamentations. "For him wept sore the king and his *wife*, but he comforted both their bodies (*lip*); he said, 'Ye must not weep, for my body ever shall ye be without care.'"

Sad was it to the Recken,	Stood weeping many a maid;
I ween their heart had them	The tidings true foresaid,
That of their friends so many	Death thereby should find;
Cause had they of lamenting,	Such boding in their mind.

¹ This is a never-failing preparative for all expeditions, and always specified and insisted on with a simple, loving, almost female impressiveness.

Nevertheless, on the seventh morning, that adventurous company "ride up the sand," on the Rhinebeach, to Worms; in high temper, in dress and trappings, aspect and bearing more than kingly.

Siegfried's reception at King Gunther's court, and his brave sayings and doings there for some time, we must omit. One fine trait of his chivalrous delicacy it is that, for a whole year, he never hints at his errand; never once sees or speaks of Chriemhild, whom, nevertheless, he is longing day and night to meet. She, on her side, has often through her lattices noticed the gallant stranger, victorious in all tiltings and knightly exercises; whereby it would seem, in spite of her rigorous predeterminations, some kindness for him is already gliding in. Meanwhile, mighty wars and threats of invasion arise, and Siegfried does the state good service. Returning victorious, both as general and soldier, from Hessen (Hessia), where, by help of his own courage and the sword Balmung, he has captured a Danish king, and utterly discomfited a Saxon one; he can now show himself before Chriemhild without other blushes than those of timid love. Nay the maiden has herself inquired pointedly of the messengers, touching his exploits; and "her face grew rose-red when she heard them." A gay High-tide, by way of triumph, is appointed; several kings, and two-and-thirty princes, and knights enough with "gold-red saddles," come to joust; and better than whole infinities of kings and princes with their saddles, the fair Chriemhild herself, under guidance of her mother, chiefly too in honour of the victor, is to grace that sport. "Ute the full rich" fails not to set her needle-women to work, and "clothes of price are taken from their presses," for the love of her child, "wherewith to deck many women and maids." And now, "on the Whitsun-morning," all is ready, and glorious as heart could desire it; brave Ritters, "five thousand or more," all glancing in the lists; but grander still, Chriemhild herself is advancing beside her mother, with a hundred body-guards, all sword-in-hand, and many a noble maid "wearing rich raiment," in her train!

"Now issued forth the lovely one (*minnechliche*), as the red morning doth from troubled clouds; much care fled away from him who bore her in his heart, and long had done; he saw the lovely one stand in her beauty.

"There glanced from her garments full many precious stones, her rose-red colour shone full lovely: try what he might, each man must confess that in this world he had not seen aught so fair.

"Like as the light moon stands before the stars, and its sheen so clear goes over the clouds, even so stood she now before many fair women; whereat cheered was the mind of the hero.

"The rich chamberlains you saw go before her, the high-spirited Recken would not forbear, but pressed on where they saw the lovely maiden. Siegfried the lord was both glad and sad.

"He thought in his mind, How could this be that I should woo thee? That was a foolish dream; yet must I forever be a stranger, I were rather (*sanfter*, softer) dead. He became, from these thoughts, in quick changes, pale and red.

"Thus stood so lovely the child of Siegelinde, as if he were limned on parchment by a master's art; for all granted that hero so beautiful they had never seen."

In this passage, which we have rendered, from the Fifth *Adventure*, into the closest prose, it is to be remarked, among other singularities, that there are two similes: in which figure of speech our old Singer deals very sparingly. The first, that comparison of Chriemhild to the moon among stars with its sheen going over the clouds, has now for many centuries had little novelty or merit: but the second, that of Siegfried to a Figure in some illuminated Manuscript, is graceful in itself; and unspeakably so to antiquaries, seldom honoured, in their Black-letter stubbing and grubbing, with such a poetic windfall!

A prince and a princess of this quality are clearly made for one another. Nay, on the motion of young Herr Gernot, fair Chriemhild is bid specially to salute Siegfried, she who had never before saluted man; which unparalleled grace the lovely one, in all courtliness, openly does him. "Be welcome," said she, "Herr Siegfried, a noble Ritter good;" from which salute, for this seems to have been all, "much raised was his mind." He bowed with graceful reverence, as his manner was with women; she took him

by the hand, and with fond stolen glances they looked at each other. Whether in that ceremonial joining of hands there might not be some soft, slight pressure, of far deeper import, is what our Singer will not take upon him to say; however, he thinks the affirmative more probable. Henceforth, in that bright May weather, the two were seen constantly together: nothing but felicity around and before them.—In these days, truly, it must have been that the famous Prize-fight, with Dietrich of Bern and his Eleven Lombardy Champions, took place, little to the profit of the two Lovers; were it not rather that the whole of that Rose-garden transaction, as given in the “Heldenbuch,” might be falsified and even imaginary; for no mention or hint of it occurs here. War or battle is not heard of; Siegfried the peerless walks wooingly by the side of Chriemhild the peerless; matters, it is evident, are in the best possible course.

But now comes a new side-wind, which, however, in the long-run also forwards the voyage. Tidings, namely, reached over the Rhine, not so surprising we might hope, “that there was many a fair maiden;” whereupon Gunther the King “thought with himself to win one of them.” It was an honest purpose in King Gunther, only his choice was not the discreetest. For no fair maiden will content him but Queen Brunhild, a lady who rules in *Isenland*, far over sea, famed indeed for her beauty, yet no less so for her caprices. Fables we have met with of this Brunhild being properly a *Valkyr*, or Scandinavian Houri, such as were wont to lead old northern warriors from their last battle-field into Valhalla; and that her castle of *Isenstein* stood amidst a lake of fire: but this, as we said, is fable and groundless calumny, of which there is not so much as notice taken here. Brunhild, it is plain enough, was a flesh-and-blood maiden, glorious in look and faculty, only with some preternatural talents given her, and the strangest wayward habits. It appears, for example, that any suitor proposing for her has this brief condition to proceed upon: he must try the adorable in the three several games of hurling the Spear (at one another), Leaping, and throwing the Stone: if

victorious, he gains her hand; if vanquished, he loses his own head; which latter issue, such is the fair Amazon's strength, frequent fatal experiment has shown to be the only probable one.

Siegfried, who knows something of Brunhild and her ways, votes clearly against the whole enterprise; however, Gunther has once for all got the whim in him, and must see it out. The prudent Hagen von Troneg, uncle to love-sick Gunther, and ever true to him, then advises that Siegfried be requested to take part in the adventure; to which request Siegfried readily accedes on one condition: that, should they prove fortunate, he himself is to have Chriemhild to wife when they return. This readily settled, he now takes charge of the business, and throws a little light on it for the others. They must lead no army thither; only two, Hagen and Dankwart, besides the king and himself, shall go. The grand subject of *waite*¹ (clothes) is next hinted at, and in general terms elucidated; whereupon a solemn consultation with Chriemhild ensues; and a great cutting-out, on her part, of white silk from Araby, of green silk from Zazemang, of strange fish-skins covered with morocco silk; a great sewing thereof for seven weeks, on the part of her maids; lastly, a fitting-on of the three suits by each hero, for each had three; and heartiest thanks in return, seeing all fitted perfectly, and was of grace and price unutterable. What is still more to the point, Siegfried takes his Cloak of Darkness with him, fancying he may need it there. The good old Singer, who has hitherto alluded only in the faintest way to Siegfried's prior adventures and miraculous possessions, introduces this of the *Tarnkappe* with great frankness and simplicity. "Of wild dwarfs (*getwergen*)," says he, "I have heard tell, they are in hollow mountains, and for defence wear somewhat called *Tarnkappe*, of wondrous sort;" the qualities of which garment, that it renders invisible, and gives twelve men's strength, are already known to us.

¹ English *weds*, and Scotch *wad* (pledge); and, say the etymologists, and even *wedding*.

The voyage to Isenstein, Siegfried steering the ship thither, is happily accomplished in twenty days. Gunther admires to a high degree the fine masonry of the place; as indeed he well might, there being some eighty-six towers, three immense palaces and one immense hall, the whole built of "marble green as grass;" farther he sees many fair women looking from the windows down on the bark, and thinks the loveliest is she in the snow-white dress; which, Siegfried informs him, is a worthy choice; the snow-white maiden being no other than Brunhild. It is also to be kept in mind that Siegfried, for reasons known best to himself, had previously stipulated that, though a free king, they should all treat him as vassal of Gunther, for whom accordingly he holds the stirrup, as they mount on the beach; thereby giving rise to a misconception, which in the end led to saddest consequences.

Queen Brunhild, who had called back her maidens from the windows, being a strict disciplinarian, and retired into the interior of her green marble Isenstein, to dress still better, now inquires of some attendant, Who these strangers of such lordly aspect are, and what brings them? The attendant professes himself at a loss to say; one of them looks like Siegfried, the other is evidently by his port a noble king. His notice of Von Troneg Hagen is peculiarly vivid:

The third of those companions He is of aspect stern,
And yet with lovely body, Rich queen, as ye might discern;
From those *his rapid glances*, For the eyes nought rest in him,
Meseems this foreign Recke Is of temper fierce and grim.

This is one of those little graphic touches, scattered all over our Poem, which do more for picturing out an object, especially a man, than whole pages of enumeration and mensuration. Never after do we hear of this stout indomitable Hagen, in all the wild deeds and sufferings he passes through, but those *swinden blicken* of his come before us, with the restless, deep, dauntless spirit that looks through them.

Brunhild's wrath is not without tartness ; which
 she shows in her violent answers and the nimblest address
 for a woman of her rank. She is here, however, only as attendant on her
 master, King Gunther, who comes to sue for her
 hand in exchange for the treasure of all earthly blessings.
 She is not the champion in fighting Siegfried himself,
 but she is a most small amount of this King Gunther
 in his own right. She is the ground, and equips
 him with the weapons which must have looked a little blank
 even to a man of his rank in his fair one's handling.
 She is the one who says "which four chamberlains
 you have chosen, and a spear or javelin she meant to shoot or
 pierce with a lance or dart." Siegfried, in angry apprehen-
 sion of the result, explains that they shall all lose
 their lives if he is the true wife, or Devil's wife.
 He is the one who is the true wife in his Cloak of Darkness,
 and the one who is the true wife in the ear of royalty to be
 a champion. He is the one who is the true wife in himself. Gunther only affecting to
 be the one who is the true wife in himself. Brunhild performs
 her part of entertaining, of making, and stone-pitching ; but
 she is the one who is the true wife in herself. He only acting
 the part of the champion, and she who strikes him up into the air, and
 then strikes him down a glorious victory, and the lovely
 Brunhild is not without surprise and shame that she is fairly
 won. Siegfried appears without *Tarnkappe*, and asks
 with a proud air if the games then are to begin?

He is the one who is the true wife in himself. Brunhild
 is the one who is the true wife in herself. She has assembled a
 great number of warriors, whom the Burgundians, being here without
 reason, are dangerous or formidable of mischief. The deft
 Siegfried, who is the true wife in himself, knows a resource. In his *Tarn-
 kappe* he says on board the bark which seen from the shore,
 appears to drift of its own accord ; and therein, stoutly steering
 towards *Völsungaland*, he reaches that mysterious country and

the mountain where his Hoard lies, before the second morning; finds Dwarf Alberich and all his giant sentinels at their post, and faithful almost to the death; these soon rouse him thirty thousand Nibelungen Recken, from whom he has only to choose one thousand of the best; equip them splendidly enough; and therewith return to Gunther, simply as if they were that sovereign's own body-guard, that had been delayed a little by stress of weather.

The final arrival at Worms; the bridal feasts, for there are two, Siegfried also receiving his reward; and the joyance and splendour of man and maid, at this lordliest of high-tides; and the joustings, greater than those at Aspramont or Montauban,—every reader can fancy for himself. Remarkable only is the evil eye with which Queen Brunhild still continues to regard the noble Siegfried. She cannot understand how Gunther, the Landlord of the Rhine,¹ should have bestowed his sister on a vassal: the assurance that Siegfried also is a prince and heir-apparent, the prince namely of Netherland, and little inferior to Burgundian majesty itself, yields no complete satisfaction; and Brunhild hints plainly that, unless the truth be told her, unpleasant consequences may follow. Thus is there ever a ravelled thread in the web of life! But for this little cloud of spleen, these bridal feasts had been all bright and balmy as the month of June. Unluckily too, the cloud is an electric one; spreads itself in time into a general earthquake; nay that very night becomes a thunder-storm, or tornado, unparalleled we may hope in the annals of connubial happiness.

The singer of the "Nibelungen," unlike the author of "Roderick Random," cares little for intermeddling with "the chaste mysteries of Hymen." Could we, in the corrupt ambiguous modern tongue, hope to exhibit any shadow of the old simple, true-hearted, merely historical spirit, with which, in perfect purity of soul, he describes

¹ *Der Wirt von Rine*: singular enough, the word *Wirth*, often applied to royalty in that old dialect, is now also the title of innkeepers. To such base uses may we come.

things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme,—we could a thousand times. Suffice it to say, King Gunther, Landlord of the Rhine falling sheer down from the third heaven of hope, finds his spot the most sublime and remarkable of women; and himself, at the close of the adventure, nowise encircled in her arms, but the hard and fast hand and foot in her girdle, and hung thereby at considerable elevation, on a nail in the wall. Let any reader of sensibility figure the emotions of the royal breast, there he vibrates suspended on his peg, and his inexorable bride sleeping sound in her bed below! Towards morning he capitulates: engaging to observe the prescribed line of conduct with utmost strictness so he may but avoid becoming a laughing-stock to all men.

No wonder the dread King looked rather grave next morning and received the congratulations of mankind in a cold manner. He confesses to Siegfried, who partly suspects how it may be that he has brought the "evil devil" home to his house in the shape of wife, whereby he is wretched enough. However, there are remedies for all things but death. The ever-serviceable Siegfried undertakes even here to make the crooked straight. What may not an honest friend with Tamkappe and twelve men's strength perform? Proud Brunhild, next night, after fierce contest, owes herself again vanquished; Gunther is then to reap the fruits of another's victory; the noble Siegfried withdraws, taking nothing with him but the luxury of doing good, and the proud queen's Ring and Girdle gained from her in the struggle; which small trophies he, with the last infirmity of a noble mind, presents to his own fond wife, little dreaming that they would one day cost him and her, and all of them, so dear. Such readers as take any interest in poor Gunther will be gratified to learn, that from this hour Brunhild's preternatural faculties quite left her, being all dependent on her maidhood; so that any more spear-hurling, or other the like extraordinary work, is not to be apprehended from her.

If we add, that Siegfried formerly made over to his dear

riemhild the Nibelungen Hoard, by way of *Morgengabe* (or, we may say, Jointure); and the high-tide, though not the weymoon, being past, returned to Netherland with his spouse, be welcomed there with infinite rejoicings,—we have gone enough as it were the First Act of this Tragedy; and may here use to look round us for a moment. The main characters are now introduced on the scene, the relations that bind them together are dimly sketched out: there is the prompt, cheerly heroic, invulnerable and invincible Siegfried, now happiest of men; the high Chriemhild, fitly-mated, and if a moon, revolving glorious round her sun, or *Friedel* (joy and darling); not without male and female aspirings, yet not prouder than one so gifted and placed is pardonable for being. On the other hand, we have King Gunther, or rather let us say king's-mantle Gunther, never except in that one enterprise of courting Brunhild, in which too, without help, he would have cut so poor a figure, as the worthy sovereign show will of his own, or character better than that of good potter's clay; farther, the suspicious, recasting, yet stout and reckless Hagen, him with the *rapid* ~~ances~~, and ~~these turned not too kindly on Siegfried~~, whose prowess he has used yet dreads, whose *Nibelungen Hoard* he ~~rhaps already covets~~; lastly, the rigorous and vigorous Brunhild, of whom also more is to be feared than hoped. Considering the fierce nature of these now mingled ingredients; and how, except perhaps in the case of Gunther, there is no menstruum of acid stupidity to soften them; except in Siegfried, no element heroic truth to master them and bind them together,—unquiet fermentation may readily be apprehended.

Meanwhile, for a season all is peace and sunshine. Siegfried reigns in Netherland, of which his father has surrendered him the crown; Chriemhild brings him a son, whom in honour of the uncle he christens Gunther, which courtesy the uncle and Brunhild repay in kind. The Nibelungen Hoard is still open and inexhaustible; Dwarf Alberich and all the Recken there still yal; outward relations friendly, internal supremely prosperous:

these are halcyon days. But, alas, they cannot last. Queen Brunhild, retaining with true female tenacity her first notion, right or wrong, reflects one day that Siegfried, who is and shall be nothing but her husband's vassal, has for a long while paid him no service; and, determined on a remedy, manages that Siegfried and his queen shall be invited to a high-tide at Worms, where opportunity may chance for enforcing that claim. Thither accordingly, after ten years' absence, we find these illustrious guests returning; Siegfried escorted by a thousand Nibelungen Ritters, and farther by his father Siegemund who leads a train of Netherlanders. Here for eleven days, amid infinite joustings, there is a true heaven-on-earth: but the apple of discord is already lying in the knightly ring, and two Women, the proudest and keenest-tempered of the world, simultaneously stoop to lift it. *Aventiure* Fourteenth is entitled "How the two queens rated one another." Never was courtlier Billingsgate uttered, or which came more directly home to the business and bosoms of women. The subject is that old story of Precedence, which indeed, from the time of Cain and Abel downwards, has wrought such effusion of blood and bile both among men and women; lying at the bottom of all armaments and battle-fields, whether Blenheims and Waterloos, or only plate-displays, and tongue-and-eye skirmishes, in the circle of domestic Tea: nay, the very animals have it; and horses, were they but the miserablest Shelties and Welsh ponies, will not graze together till it has been ascertained, by clear fight, who is master of whom, and a proper drawing-room etiquette established.

Brunhild and Chriemhild take to arguing about the merits of their husbands: the latter, fondly expatiating on the preëminence of her *Friedel*, how he walks "like the moon among stars" before all other men, is reminded by her sister that one man at least must be excepted, the mighty King Gunther of Worms, to whom by his own confession long ago at Isenstein, he is vassal and servant. Chriemhild will sooner admit that clay is above sunbeams, than any such proposition; which therefore she, in all—

liteness, requests of her sister never more to touch upon while she lives. The result may be foreseen: rejoinder follows reply, statement grows assertion; flint-sparks have fallen on the dry straw, which from smoke bursts into conflagration. The two teens part in hottest, though still clear-flaming anger. Not, however, to let their anger burn out, but only to feed it with more solid fuel. Chriemhild dresses her forty maids in finer than royal apparel; orders out all her husband's Recken; and so attended, walks foremost to the Minster, where mass is to be said; thus practically asserting that she is not only a true queen, but the worthier of the two. Brunhild, quite outdone in splendour, is enraged beyond all patience, overtakes her at the door of the minster, with peremptory order to stop: "before king's wife shall assal's never go."

Then said the fair Chriemhilde, Right angry was her mood:
 Couldst thou but hold thy peace, It were surely for thy good;
 Thyself hast all polluted With shame thy fair bodye;
 How can a Concubine By right a King's wife be?"

Whom hast thou Concubined?" The King's wife quickly spake;
 That do I thee," said Chriemhild; "For thy pride and vaunting's sake;
 Who first had thy fair body Was Siegfried my beloved Man;
 My Brother it was not That thy maidhood from thee wan."

In proof of which outrageous saying, she produces that Ring and Girdle; the innocent conquest of which, as we well know, had a far other origin. Brunhild burst into tears; "sadder day I never saw." Nay, perhaps a new light now rose on her forehead which had been dark in her late history; "she rued full sore what she had ever she was born."

Here, then, is the black injury, which only blood will wash away. The evil fiend has begun his work; and the issue of it is beyond man's control. Siegfried may protest his innocence against that calumny, and chastise his indiscreet spouse for uttering it even in the heat of anger: the female heart is wounded beyond healing; the old springs of bitterness against this hero unite into

a fell flood of hate; while he sees the sunlight, she cannot know a joyful hour. Vengeance is soon offered her: Hagen, who lives only for his prince, undertakes this bad service; by treacherous professions of attachment, and anxiety to guard Siegfried's life, he gains from Chriemhild the secret of his vulnerability; Siegfried is carried out to hunt; and in the hour of frankest gaiety is stabbed through the fatal spot; and, felling the murderer to the ground, dies upbraiding his false kindred, yet, with a touching simplicity, recommending his child and wife to their protection. "Let her feel that she is your sister; was there ever virtue in princes, be true to her: for me my Father and my men shall long wait." The flowers all around were wetted with blood, then he struggled with death; not long did he this, the weapon cut him too keen; so he could speak nought more, the Recke bold and noble."

At this point, we might say, ends the Third Act of our Tragedy; the whole story henceforth takes a darker character; it is as if a tone of sorrow and fateful boding became more and more audible in its free light music. Evil has produced new evil in fatal augmentation: injury is abolished; but in its stead there is guilt and despair. Chriemhild, an hour ago so rich, is now robbed of all: her grief is boundless as her love has been. No glad thought can ever more dwell in her; darkness, utter night has come over her, as she looked into the red of morning. The spoiler too walks abroad unpunished; the bleeding corpse witnesses against Hagen, nay he himself cares not to hide the deed. But who is there to avenge the friendless? Siegfried's Father has returned in haste to his own land; Chriemhild is now alone on the earth, her husband's grave is all that remains to her; there only can she sit, as if waiting at the threshold of her own dark home; and in prayers and tears pour out the sorrow and love that have no end. Still farther injuries are heaped on her: by advice of the crafty Hagen, Gunther, who had not planned the murder, yet permitted and witnessed it, now comes with whining professions of repentance and good-will; persuades her to send

for the Nibelungen Hoard to Worms; where no sooner is it arrived, than Hagen and the rest forcibly take it from her; and her last trust in affection or truth from mortal is rudely cut away. Bent to the earth, she weeps only for her lost Siegfried, knows no comfort, but will weep forever.

One lurid gleam of hope, after long years of darkness, breaks in on her, in the prospect of revenge. King Etzel sends from his far country to solicit her hand: the embassy she hears at first, as a woman of ice might do; the good Rudiger, Etzel's spokesman, pleads in vain that his king is the richest of all earthly kings; that he is so lonely "since Frau Helke died;" that though a heathen, he has Christians about him, and may one day be converted: till at length, when he hints distantly at the power of Etzel to avenge her injuries, she on a sudden becomes all attention. Hagen, foreseeing such possibilities, protests against the match; but is overruled: Chriemhild departs with Rudiger for the land of the Huns; taking cold leave of her relations; only two of whom, her brothers Gernot and Giseler, innocent of that murder, does she admit near her as convoy to the Donau.

The Nibelungen Hoard has hitherto been fatal to all its possessors; to the two sons of Nibelung; to Siegfried its conqueror: neither does the Burgundian Royal House fare better with it. Already, discords threatening to arise, Hagen sees prudent to sink it in the Rhine; first taking oath of Gunther and his brothers, that none of them shall reveal the hiding-place, while any of the rest is alive. But the curse that clave to it could not be sunk there. The Nibelungen-land is now theirs: they themselves are henceforth called Nibelungen; and this history of their fate is the Nibelungen Song, or "Nibelungen Noth" (Nibelungen's Need, extreme Need, or final wreck and abolition).

The Fifth Act of our strange eventful history now draws on. Chriemhild has a kind husband, of hospitable disposition, who troubles himself little about her secret feelings and intents. With his permission, she sends two minstrels, inviting the Burgundian

Court to a high-tide at Etzel's: she has charged the messengers to say that she is happy, and to bring all Gunther's champions with them. Her eye was on Hagen, but she could not single him from the rest. After seven days' deliberation, Gunther answers that he will come. Hagen has loudly dissuaded the journey, but again been overruled. "It is his fate," says a commentator, "like Cassandra's, ever to foresee the evil, and ever to be disregarded." He himself shut his ear against the inward voice; and now his warnings are uttered to the deaf." He argues long, but in vain: nay young Gernot hints at last that this aversion originates in personal fear:

Then spake Von Troneg Hagen: "Nowise is it through fear;
 So you command it, Heroes, Then up, gird on your gear;
 I ride with you the foremost Into King Etzel's land."
 Since then full many a helm Was shivered by his hand.

Frau Ute's dreams and omens are now unavailing with him; "whoso heedeth dreams," said Hagen, "of the right story wotteth not:" he has computed the worst issue, and defied it.

Many a little touch of pathos, and even solemn beauty lies carelessly scattered in these rhymes, had we space to exhibit such here. As specimen of a strange, winding, diffuse, yet innocently graceful style of narrative, we had translated some considerable portion of this Twenty-fifth *Aventiure*, "How the Nibelungen marched (fared) to the Huns," into verses as literal as might be; which now, alas, look mournfully different from the original; almost like Scriblerus's shield when the barbarian housemaid had scoured it! Nevertheless, to do for the reader what we can, let somewhat of that modernized ware, such as it is, be set before him. The brave Nibelungen are on the eve of departure; and about ferrying over the Rhine: and here it may be noted that Worms,¹ with our old Singer, lies not in its true position, but at

¹ The City of Worms, had we a right imagination, ought to be as venerable to us Moderns, as any Thebes or Troy was to the Ancients. Whether founded by the Gods or not, it is of quite unknown antiquity, and has witnessed the

some distance from the river; a proof at least that he was never there, and probably sang and lived in some very distant region :

The boats were floating ready, And many men there were;
What clothes of price they had They took and stow'd them there,
Was never a rest from toiling Until the eventide,
Then they took the flood right gaily, Would longer not abide.

Brave tents and hutches You saw raised on the grass,
Other side the Rhine-stream That camp it pitched was:
The king to stay a while Was besought of his fair wife;
That night she saw him with her, And never more in life.

most wonderful things. Within authentic times, the Romans were here; and if tradition may be credited, Attila also; it was the seat of the Austrasian kings; the frequent residence of Charlemagne himself; innumerable Festivals, High-tides, Tournaments and Imperial Diets were held in it, of which latter, one at least, that where Luther appeared in 1521, will be forever remembered by all mankind. Nor is Worms more famous in history than, as indeed we may see here, it is in romance; whereof many monuments and vestiges remain to *this day*. "A pleasant meadow there," says Von der Hagen, "is still called Chriemhild's *Rosengarten*. The name *Worms* itself is derived (by Legendary Etymology) from the Dragon, or *Worm*, which Siegfried slew, the figure of which once formed the City Arms; in past times, there was also to be seen here an ancient strong *Riesen-Haus* (Giant's-house), and many a memorial of Siegfried: his Lance, 66 feet long (almost 80 English feet), in the Cathedral; his Statue, of gigantic size, on the *Neue Thurm* (New Tower) on the Rhine;" etc., etc. "And lastly the Siegfried's Chapel, in primeval, Pre-Gothic architecture, not long since pulled down. In the time of the *Meistersängers* too, the Stadtrath was bound to give every Master, who sang the lay of Siegfried ("Meisterlied von Siegfrieden," the purport of which is now unknown) without mistake, a certain gratuity." "Glossary to the *Nibelungen*," § Worms.

One is sorry to learn that this famed Imperial City is no longer Imperial, but much fallen in every way from its palmy state; the 30,000 inhabitants, to be found there in Gustavus Adolphus' time, having now declined into some 6,800,—“who maintain themselves by wine-growing, Rhine-boats, tobacco-manufacture, and making sugar-of-lead.” So hard has war, which respects nothing, pressed on Worms, ill-placed for safety, on the hostile border: Louvois, or Louis XIV., in 1689, had it utterly devastated; whereby in the interior, “spaces that were once covered with buildings are now gardens.” See “Conv. Lexicon,” § Worms.

Trumpets and flutes spoke out, At dawning of the day,
That time was come for parting, So they rose to march away:
Who loved-one had in arms Did kiss that same, I ween;
And fond farewells were bidden By cause of Etzel's Queen.

Frau Ute's noble sons They had a serving-man,
A brave one and a true: Or ever the march began,
He speaketh to King Gunther, What for his ear was fit,
He said: "Woe for this journey, I grieve because of it."

He, Rumold hight, the Sewer, Was known as hero true;
He spake: "Whom shall this people And land be trusted to?
Woe on 't, will nought persuade ye, Brave Recken, from this road!
Frau Chriemhild's flattering message No good doth seem to bode."

"The land to thee be trusted, And my fair boy also,
And serve thou well the women, I tell thee ere I go;
Whomso thou findest weeping Her heart give comfort to;
No harm to one of us King Etzel's wife will do."

The steeds were standing ready, For the Kings and for their men;
With kisses tenderest Took leave full many then,
Who, in gallant cheer and hope, To march were nought afraid:
Then since that day bewaileth Many a noble wife and maid.

But when the rapid Recken Took horse and prickt away,
The women shent in sorrow You saw behind them stay;
Of parting all too long Their hearts to them did tell;
When grief so great is coming, The mind forbodes not well.

Nathless the brisk Burgonden All on their way did go,
Then rose the country over A mickle dole and woe;
On both sides of the hills Woman and man did weep:
Let their folk do how they list, These gay their course did keep.

The Nibelungen Recken ¹ Did march with them as well,
In a thousand glittering hauberts, Who at home had ta'en farewell
Of many a fair woman Should see them never more:
The wound of her brave Siegfried Did grieve Chriemhilde sore.

¹ These are the Nibelungen proper who had come to Worms with Siegfried, on the famed bridal journey from Isenstein, long ago. Observe, at the same time, that ever since the *Nibelungen Hoard* was transferred to Rhine-land, the whole subjects of King Gunther are often called Nibelungen, and their subsequent history is the *Nibelungen Song*.

Then 'gan they shape their journey Towards the River Maine,
All on through East Franconia, King Gunther and his train;
Hagen he was their leader, Of old did know the way;
Dankwart did keep, as marshal, Their ranks in good array.

As they, from East Franconia, The Salfeld rode along,
Might you have seen them prancing, A bright and lordly throng,
The Princes and their vassals, All heroes of great fame:
The twelfth morn brave King Gunther Unto the Donau came.

There rode Von Troneg Hagen, The foremost of that host,
He was to the Nibelungen The guide they lov'd the most:
The Ritter keen dismounted, Set foot on the sandy ground,
His steed to a tree he tied, Looked wistful all around.

"Much scaith," Von Troneg said, "May lightly chance to thee,
King Gunther, by this tide, As thou with eyes mayst see:
The river is overflowing, Full strong runs here its stream,
For crossing of this Donau Some counsel might well beseem."

"What counsel hast thou, brave Hagen," King Gunther then did say,
"Of thy own wit and cunning? Dishearten me not, I pray:
Thyself the ford wilt find us, If knightly skill it can,
That safe to yonder shore We may pass both horse and man."

"To me, I trow," spake Hagen, "Life hath not grown so cheap,
To go with will and drown me In riding these waters deep;
But first, of men some few By this hand of mine shall die,
In great King Etzel's country, As best good-will have I.

"But bide ye here by the River, Ye Ritters brisk and sound,
Myself will seek some boatman, If boatman here be found,
To row us at his ferry, Across to Gelfrat's land:"
The Troneger grasped his buckler, Fared forth along the strand.

He was full bravely harness'd, Himself he knightly love,
With buckler and with helmet, Which bright enough he wore:
And, bound above his hauberk, A weapon broad was seen,
That cut with both its edges, Was never sword so keen.

Then hither he and thither Search'd for the Ferryman,
He heard a splashing of waters, To watch the same he 'gan,
It was the white Mer-women, That in a fountain clear,
To cool their fair bodies, Were merrily bathing here.

From these Mer-women, who "skimmed aloof like white cygnets" at sight of him, Hagen snatches up "their wondrous raiment;" on condition of returning which, they rede him his fortune; how this expedition is to speed. At first favourably :

She said: "To Etzel's country Of a truth ye well may hie,
For here I pledge my hand, Now kill me if I lie,
That heroes seeking honour Did never arrive thereat
So richly as ye shall do, Believe thou surely that."

But no sooner is the wondrous raiment restored them than they change their tale; for in spite of that matchless honour, it appears every one of the adventurous Recken is to perish.

Outspake the wild Mer-woman: "I tell thee it will arrive,
Of all your gallant host No man shall be left alive,
Except King Gunther's chaplain, As we full well do know;
He only, home returning, To the Rhine-land back shall go."

Then spake Von Troneg Hagen, His wrath did fiercely swell:
"Such tidings to my master I were right loath to tell,
That in King Etzel's country We all must lose our life:
Yet show me over the water, Thou wise all-knowing *wife*."

Thereupon, seeing him bent on ruin, she gives directions how to find the ferry, but withal counsels him to deal warily; the ferry-house stands on the other side of the river; the boatman, too, is not only the hottest-tempered of men, but rich and indolent; nevertheless, if nothing else will serve, let Hagen call himself Amelrich, and that name will bring him. All happens as predicted: the boatman, heedless of all shouting and offers of gold clasps, bestirs him lustily at the name of Amelrich; but the more indignant is he, on taking-in his fare, to find it a counterfeit. He orders Hagen, if he loves his life, to leap out.

"Now say not that," spake Hagen; "Right hard am I bested,
Take from me for good friendship This clasp of gold so red;
And row our thousand heroes And steeds across this river."
Then spake the wrathful boatman, "That will I surely never."

Then one of his oars he lifted, Right broad it was and long,
 He struck it down on Hagen, Did the hero mickle wrong,
 That in the boat he staggered, And alighted on his knee;
 Other such wrathful boatman Did never the Troneger see.

His proud unbidden guest He would now provoke still more,
 He struck his head so stoutly That it broke in twain the oar,
 With strokes on head of Hagen; He was a sturdy wight:
 Nathless had Gelfrat's boatman Small profit of that fight.

With fiercely-raging spirit The Troneger turn'd him round,
 Clutch'd quick enough his scabbard, And a weapon there he found;
~~He smote his head from off him,~~ ~~And cast it on the sand,~~
~~Thus had that wrathful boatman~~ ~~His death from Hagen's hand.~~

Even as Von Troneg Hagen The wrathful boatman slew,
 The boat whirl'd round to the river, He had work enough to do;
 Or ever he turn'd it shorewards, To weary he began,
 But kept full stoutly rowing, The bold King Gunther's man.

He wheel'd it back, brave Hagen, With many a lusty stroke,
 The strong oar, with such rowing, In his hand asunder broke;
 He fain would reach the Recken, All waiting on the shore,
 No tackle now he had; Hei,¹ how deftly he spliced the oar,

With thong from off his buckler! It was a slender band;
 Right over against a forest He drove the boat to land;
 Where Gunther's Recken waited, In crowds along the beach;
 Full many a goodly hero Moved down his boat to reach.

Hagen ferries them over himself "into the unknown land," like a right rare steersman; yet ever brooding fiercely on that prediction of the wild Mer-woman, which had outdone even his own dark forebodings. Seeing the Chaplain, who alone of them

¹ These apparently insignificant circumstances, down even to mending the oar from his shield, are preserved with a singular fidelity in the most distorted editions of the Tale: see, for example, the Danish ballad, "Lady Grimhild's Wrack" (translated in the "Northern Antiquities," p. 275, by Mr. Jamieson). This "*Hei!*" is a brisk interjection, whereby the worthy old Singer now and then introduces his own person, when anything very eminent is going forward.

all was to return, standing in the boat beside his *chappelsoume* (pyxes and other sacred furniture), he determines to belie at least this part of the prophecy, and on a sudden hurls the chaplain overboard. Nay as the poor priest swims after the boat, he pushes him down, regardless of all remonstrance, resolved that he shall die. Nevertheless it proved not so: the chaplain made for the other side; when his strength failed, "then God's hand helped him," and at length he reached the shore. Thus does the stern truth stand revealed to Hagen, by the very means he took for eluding it: "he thought with himself these Recken must all lose their lives." From this time, a grim reckless spirit takes possession of him; a courage, an audacity, waxing more and more into the fixed strength of desperation. The passage once finished, he dashes the boat in pieces, and casts it in the stream, greatly as the others wonder at him.

"Why do ye this, good brother?" Said the Ritter Dankwart then;
 "How shall we cross this river, When the road we come again?
 Returning home from Hunland, Here must we lingering stay?"—
Not then did Hagen tell him That return no more could they.

In this shipment "into the unknown land," there lies, for the more penetrating sort of commentators, some hidden meaning and allusion. The destruction of the unreturning Ship, as of the Ship Argo, of Æneas's Ships, and the like, is a constant feature of such traditions: it is thought, this ferrying of the Nibelungen has a reference to old Scandinavian Mythuses; nay to the oldest, most universal emblems shaped out by man's Imagination; Hagen the ferryman being, in some sort, a type of Death, who ferries over his thousands and tens of thousands into a Land still more unknown.¹

But leaving these considerations, let us remark the deep fearful interest which, in gathering strength, rises to a really tragical

¹ See Von der Hagen's "Nibelungen, ihre Bedeutung," etc.

height in the close of this Poem. Strangely has the old Singer, in these his loose melodies, modulated the wild narrative into a poetic whole, with what we might call true art, were it not rather an instinct of genius still more unerring. A fateful gloom now hangs over the fortunes of the Nibelungen, which deepens and deepens as they march onwards to the judgment-bar, till all are engulfed in utter night.

Hagen himself rises in tragic greatness; so helpful, so prompt and strong is he, and true to the death, though without hope. If sin can ever be pardoned, then that one act of his is pardonable; by loyal faith, by free daring and heroic constancy, he has made amends for it. Well does he know what is coming; yet he goes forth to meet it, offers to Ruin his sullen welcome, Warnings thicken on him, which he treats lightly, as things now superfluous. Spite of our love for Siegfried, we must pity and almost respect the lost Hagen now in his extreme need, and fronting it so nobly. "Mixed was his hair with a gray colour, his limbs strong, and threatening his look." Nay, his sterner qualities are beautifully tempered by another feeling, of which till now we understood not that he was capable,—the feeling of friendship. There is a certain Volker of Alsace here introduced, not for the first time, yet first in decided energy, who is more to Hagen than a brother. This Volker, a courtier and noble, is also a *Spielmann* (minstrel), a *Fidelere gut* (fiddler good); and surely the prince of all *Fideleres*; in truth a very phoenix, melodious as the soft nightingale, yet strong as the royal eagle: for also in the brunt of battle he can play tunes; and with a *Steel Fiddlebow* beats strange music from the cleft helmets of his enemies. There is, in this continual allusion to Volker's *Schwert-fidelsbogen* (Sword-fiddlebow), as rude as it sounds to us, a barbaric greatness and depth; the light minstrel of kingly and queenly halls is gay also in the storm of Fate, its dire rushing pipes and whistles to him: is he not the image of every brave man fighting with Necessity, be that duel when and where it may; smiting the fiend with giant strokes, yet every stroke *musical?*—This Volker and

Hagen are united inseparably, and defy death together. "Whatever Volker said pleased Hagen; whatever Hagen did pleased Volker."

But into these last Ten *Aventiures*, almost like the image of a Doomsday, we must hardly glance at present. Seldom, perhaps, in the poetry of that or any other age, has a grander scene of pity and terror been exhibited than here, could we look into it clearly. At every new step new shapes of fear arise. Dietrich of Bern meets the Nibelungen on their way, with ominous warnings: but warnings, as we said, are now superfluous, when the evil itself is apparent and inevitable. Chriemhild, wasted and exasperated here into a frightful Medea, openly threatens Hagen, but is openly defied by him; he and Volker retire to a seat before her palace, and sit there, while she advances in angry tears, with a crowd of armed Huns, to destroy them. But Hagen has Siegfried's Balmung lying naked on his knee, the Minstrel also has drawn his keen Fiddlebow, and the Huns dare not provoke the battle. Chriemhild would fain single out Hagen for vengeance; but Hagen, like other men, stands not alone; and sin is an infection which will not rest with one victim. Partakers or not of his crime, the others also must share his punishment. Singularly touching, in the meanwhile, is King Etzel's ignorance of what everyone else understands too well; and now, in peaceful hospitable spirit, he exerts himself to testify his joy over these royal guests of his, who are bidden hither for far other ends. That night the wayworn Nibelungen are sumptuously lodged; yet Hagen and Volker see good to keep watch: Volker plays them to sleep: "under the porch of the house he sat on the stone: bolder fiddler was there never any; when the tones flowed so sweetly, they all gave him thanks. Then sounded his strings till all the house rang; his strength and the art were great; sweeter and sweeter he began to play, till flitted forth from him into sleep full many a careworn soul." It was their last lullaby; they were to sleep no more. Armed men appear, but suddenly vanish, in the night;

Hagen!
11

assassins sent by Chriemhild, expecting no sentinel: it is plain that the last hour draws nigh.

In the morning the Nibelungen are for the Minster to hear mass; they are putting on gay raiment; but Hagen tells them a different tale: “‘ye must take other garments, Recken; instead of silk shirts hauberks, for rich mantles your good shields: and, beloved masters, moreover squires and men, ye shall full earnestly go to the church, and plain to God the powerful (*Got dem richen*) of your sorrow and utmost need; and know of a surety that death for us is nigh.’” In Etzel’s Hall, where the Nibelungen appear at the royal feast in complete armour, the Strife, incited by Chriemhild, begins; the first answer to her provocation is from Hagen, who hews off the head of her own and Etzel’s son, making it bound into the mother’s bosom: “then began among the Recken a murder grim and great.” Dietrich, with a voice of preternatural power, commands pause; retires with Etzel and Chriemhild; and now the bloody work has free course. We have heard of battles, and massacres, and deadly struggles in siege and storm; but seldom has even the poet’s imagination pictured anything so fierce and terrible as this. Host after host, as they enter that huge vaulted Hall, perish in conflict with the doomed Nibelungen; and ever after the terrific uproar, ensues a still more terrific silence. All night and through morning it lasts. They throw the dead from the windows; blood runs like water; the Hall is set fire to, they quench it with blood, their own burning thirst they slake with blood. It is a tumult like the Crack of Doom, a thousand-voiced, wild-stunning hubbub; and, frightful like a Trump of Doom, the Sword-fiddlebow of Volker, who guards the door, makes music to that death-dance. Nor are traits of heroism wanting, and thrilling tones of pity and love; as in that act of Rudiger, Etzel’s and Chriemhild’s champion, who, bound by oath, “lays his soul in God’s hand,” and enters that Golgotha to die fighting against his friends; yet first changes shields with Hagen, whose own, also given him by Rudiger in a far other hour, had been shattered in the fight. “When he so lovingly bade give him the shield, there

were eyes enough red with hot tears; it was the last gift which Rudiger of Bechelaren gave to any Recke. As grim as Hagen was, and as hard of mind, he wept at this gift which the hero good, so near his last times, had given him; full many a noble Ritter began to weep."

At last Volker is slain; they are all slain, save only Hagen and Gunther, faint and wounded, yet still unconquered among the bodies of the dead. Dietrich the wary, though strong and invincible, whose Recken too, except old Hildebrand, he now finds are all killed, though he had charged them strictly not to mix in the quarrel, at last arms himself to finish it. He subdues the two wearied Nibelungen, binds them, delivers them to Chriemhild; "and Herr Dietrich went away with weeping eyes, worthily from the heroes." These never saw each other more. Chriemhild demands of Hagen, Where the Nibelungen Hoard is? But he answers her, that he has sworn never to disclose it, while any of her brothers live. "I bring it to an end," said the infuriated woman; orders her brother's head to be struck off, and holds it up to Hagen. "'Thou hast it now according to thy will,' said Hagen; 'of the Hoard knoweth none but God and I; from thee, she-devil (*valendinne*), shall it forever be hid.'" She kills him with his own sword, once her husband's; and is herself struck dead by Hildebrand, indignant at the woe she has wrought; King Etzel, there present, not opposing the deed. Whereupon the curtain drops over that wild scene: "the full highly honoured were lying dead; the people all had sorrow and lamentation; in grief had the king's feast ended, as all love is wont to do:"

*Ine chan in nicht bescheiden Was sider da geschach,
Wan ritter unde wrooven Weinen man do sach,
Dar-zuo die edeln chnechte Ir lieben vriunde tot:
Da hat das mære ein ende; Diz ist der Nibelunge not.*

I cannot say you now What hath befallen since;
The women all were weeping, And the Ritters and the prince,
Also the noble squires, Their dear friends lying dead:
Here hath the story ending; This is the *Nibelungen's Need*,

We have now finished our slight analysis of this Poem ; and hope that readers who are curious in this matter, and ask themselves, What is the "Nibelungen?" may have here found some outlines of an answer, some help towards farther researches of their own. To such readers another question will suggest itself: Whence this singular production comes to us, When and How it originated? On which point also, what little light our investigation has yielded may be summarily given.

The worthy Von der Hagen, who may well understand the "Nibelungen" better than any other man, having rendered it into the modern tongue, and twice edited it in the original, not without collating some eleven manuscripts, and travelling several thousands of miles to make the last edition perfect,—writes a Book some years ago, rather boldly denominated "The Nibelungen, its Meaning for the present and forever"; wherein, not content with any measurable antiquity of centuries, he would fain claim an antiquity beyond all bounds of dated time. Working his way with feeble mine-lamps of etymology and the like, he traces back the rudiments of his beloved "Nibelungen," "to which the flower of his whole life has been consecrated," into the thick darkness of the Scandinavian "Nifheim" and "Muspelheim," and the Hindoo Cosmogony; connecting it farther (as already in part we have incidentally pointed out) with the Ship Argo, with Jupiter's goat-skin Ægis, the fire-creed of Zerdusht, and even with the heavenly Constellations. His reasoning is somewhat abstruse; yet an honest zeal, very considerable learning and intellectual force bring him tolerably through. So much he renders plausible or probable: that in the "Nibelungen," under more or less defacement, lie fragments, scattered like mysterious Runes, yet still in part decipherable, of the earliest Thoughts of men; that the fiction of the Nibelungen was at first a religious or philosophical Mythus; and only in later ages, incorporating itself more or less completely with vague traditions of real events, took the form of a story, or mere Narrative of earthly transactions; in which last form, moreover, our actual "Nibelungen Lied" is nowise the

original Narrative, but the second, or even the third redaction of one much earlier.

At what particular era the primeval fiction of the "Nibelungen" passed from its Mythological into its Historical shape; and the obscure spiritual elements of it wedded themselves to the obscure remembrances of the Northern Immigrations; and the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac became Twelve Champions of Attila's Wife,—there is no fixing with the smallest certainty. It is known from history that Eginhart, the secretary of Charlemagne, compiled, by order of that monarch, a collection of the ancient German Songs; among which, it is fondly believed by antiquaries, this "Nibelungen" (not indeed our actual "Nibelungen Lied," yet an older one of similar purport), and the main traditions of the "Heldenbuch" connected therewith, may have had honourable place. Unluckily Eginhart's Collection has quite perished, and only his Life of the Great Charles, in which this circumstance stands noted, survives to provoke curiosity. One thing is certain, Fulco Archbishop of Rheims, in the year 885; is introduced as "citing certain German books," to enforce some argument of his by instance of "King Ermerich's crime toward his relations;" which King Ermerich and his crime are at this day part and parcel of the "Cycle of German Fiction," and presupposed in the "Nibelungen."¹ Later notices, of a more decisive sort, occur in abundance. Saxo Grammaticus, who flourished in the twelfth century, relates that about the year 1130, a Saxon Minstrel being sent to Seeland, with a treacherous invitation from one royal Dane to another; and not daring to violate his oath, yet compassionating the victim, sang to him by way of indirect warning "the Song of Chriemhild's Treachery to her Brothers;" that is to say, the latter portion of the Story which we still read at greater length in the existing "Nibelungen Lied." To which direct evidence, that these traditions were universally known in the twelfth century, nay had been in some

¹ Von der Hagen's "Nibelungen," *Einleitung*, § vii.

shape committed to writing, as "German Books," in the ninth or rather in the eighth,—we have still to add the probability of their being "ancient songs," even at that earliest date; all which may perhaps carry us back into the seventh or even sixth century; yet not farther, inasmuch as certain of the poetic personages that figure in them belong historically to the fifth.

Other and more open proof of antiquity lies in the fact, that these Traditions are so universally diffused. There are Danish and Icelandic versions of them, externally more or less altered and distorted, yet substantially real copies, professing indeed to be borrowed from the German; in particular we have the "Niflinga" and the "Wilkina Saga," composed in the thirteenth century, which still in many ways illustrate the German original. Innumerable other songs and sagas point more remotely in the same direction. Nay, as Von der Hagen informs us, certain rhymed tales, founded on these old adventures, have been recovered from popular recitation, in the Faroe Islands, within these few years.

If we ask now, What lineaments of Fact still exist in these Traditions; what are the Historical events and persons which our primeval Mythuses have here united with, and so strangely metamorphosed? the answer is unsatisfactory enough. The great Northern Immigrations, unspeakably momentous and glorious as they were for the Germans, have wellnigh faded away utterly from all vernacular records. Some traces, nevertheless, some names and dim shadows of occurrences in that grand movement, still linger here; which, in such circumstances, we gather with avidity. There can be no doubt, for example, but this "Etzel, king of Hunland," is the Attila of history; several of whose real achievements and relations are faintly yet still recognizably pictured forth in these Poems. Thus his first queen is named Halke, and in the Scandinavian versions, Herka; which last (Erca) is also the name that Priscus gives her, in the well-known account of his embassy to Attila. Moreover, it is on his second marriage, which had in fact so mysterious and tragical a character,

that the whole catastrophe of the "Nibelungen" turns. It is true, the "Scourge of God" plays but a tame part here; however, his great acts, though all past, are still visible in their fruits: besides, it is on the Northern or German personages that the tradition chiefly dwells.¹

Taking farther into account the general "Cycle," or System of Northern Tradition, whereof this "Nibelungen" is the centre and keystone, there is, as indeed we saw in the "Heldenbuch," a certain Kaiser Ottnit and a Dietrich of Bern; to whom also it seems unreasonable to deny historical existence. This *Bern* (Verona), as well as the *Rabenschlacht* (Battle of Ravenna), is continually figuring in these fictions; though whether under Ottnit we are to understand Odoacer the vanquished, and under Dietrich of Bern Theodoricus Veronensis, the victor both at Verona and Ravenna, is by no means so indubitable. Chronological difficulties stand much in the way. For our Dietrich of Bern, as we saw in the "Nibelungen," is represented as one of Etzel's Champions: now Attila died about the year 450; and this Ostrogoth Theodoric did not fight his great Battle at Verona till 489; that of Ravenna, which was followed by a three years' siege, happening next year. So that before Dietrich could become Dietrich of *Bern*, Etzel had been gone almost half a century from the scene. Startled by this anachronism, some commentators have fished out another Theodoric, eighty years prior to him of Verona, and who actually served in Attila's hosts, with a retinue of Goths and Germans; with which new Theodoric, however, the old Ottnit, or Odoacer, of the "Heldenbuch" must, in his turn, part company; whereby the case is no whit mended. Certain it

¹ [There is an historical foundation for the main fact of the story, in that in the year 437 A.D. a certain Burgundian King Gundicarius with his followers suffered an overwhelming defeat at the hands of the Huns. Moreover, in the "Lex Burgundionum" reference is made to three kings, Godomer, Gislahar, and Gundahar, in whose names at least if not their deeds the poem retains some shadowy reminiscence of fact. See preface of Simrock's edition of the "Nibelungen Lied," Stuttgart, 1892.—ED.]

seems, in the meantime, that *Dietrich*, which signifies *Rich in People*, is the same name which in Greek becomes Theodoricus; for at first (as in Procopius) this very *Theodoricus* is always written ΘΕΟΔΕΡΙΧ, which almost exactly corresponds with the German sound. But such are the inconsistencies involved in both hypotheses, that we are forced to conclude one of two things: either that the Singers of those old Lays were little versed in the niceties of History, and unambitious of passing for authorities therein; which seems a remarkably easy conclusion: or else, with Lessing, that they meant some quite other series of persons and transactions, some Kaiser Otto, and his two Anti-Kaisers (in the twelfth century); which, from what has come to light since Lessing's day, seems now an untenable position.

However, as concerns the "Nibelungen," the most remarkable coincidence, if genuine, remains yet to be mentioned. "Thwartz," a Hungarian Chronicler (or perhaps Chronicle), of we know not what authority, relates, "that Attila left his kingdom to his two sons Chaba and Aladar, the former by a Grecian mother, the latter by Kremheilch (Chriemhild) a German; that Theodoric, one of his followers, sowed dissension between them; and, along with the Teutonic hosts, took part with his half-countryman the younger son; whereupon rose a great slaughter, which lasted for fifteen days, and terminated in the defeat of Chaba (the Greek), and his flight into Asia."¹ Could we but put faith in this Thwartz, we might fancy that some vague rumour of that Kremheilch Tragedy, swoln by the way, had reached the German ear and imagination; where, gathering round older Ideas and Mythuses, as Matter round its Spirit, the first rude form of "Chriemhilde's Revenge and the Wreck of the Nibelungen" bodied itself forth in Song.

Thus any historical light emitted by these old Fictions is little better than darkness visible; sufficient at most to indicate that

¹ Weber ("Illustrations of Northern Antiquities," p. 39), who cites Görres ("Zeitung für Einsiedler") as his authority.

great Northern Immigrations, and wars and rumours of war have been; but nowise how and what they have been. Scarcely clearer is the special history of the Fictions themselves; where they were first put together, who have been their successive redactors and new-modellers. Von der Hagen, as we said, supposes that there may have been three several series of such. Two, at all events, are clearly indicated. In their present shape we have internal evidence that none of these poems can be older than the twelfth century; indeed, great part of the "Hero-book" can be proved to be considerably later. With this last it is understood that Wolfram von Eschenbach and Heinrich von Ofterdingen, two singers otherwise noted in that era, were largely concerned; but neither is there any demonstration of this vague belief: while again, in regard to the Author of our actual "Nibelungen," not so much as a plausible conjecture can be formed.

Some vote for a certain Conrad von Würzburg; others for the above-named Eschenbach and Ofterdingen; others again for Klingsohr of Ungerland, a minstrel who once passed for a magician. Against all and each of which hypotheses there are objections; and for none of them the smallest conclusive evidence. Who this gifted singer may have been, only in so far as his Work itself proves that there was but One, and the style points to the latter half of the twelfth century,—remains altogether dark: the unwearied Von der Hagen himself, after fullest investigation, gives for verdict, "we know it not."¹ Considering the

¹ [Bartsch ascribes it with some confidence to a courtly poet or Minnesinger, about 1140, of the family of Kürenberg, settled near Linz on the Danube, and regards him as the inventor of the particular form of strophe that is used in the "Nibelungenlied" as well as in the lyrical poems that are ascribed to the same singer. Simrock, however, makes light of this theory on the ground that it is based solely on a lyrical poem (in the same form of stanza as the "Nibelungenlied"), in which a knight is described as singing in Kürenberg's fashion (*Weise*). This word, he points out, may refer either to the melody or the metre; certainly the passage does not go far to prove that he invented the metre, still less that he was the composer of the Nibelungenlied in its complete form.—ED.]

high worth of the "Nibelungen," and how many feeble ballad-mongers of that *Swabian Era* have transmitted us their names, so total an oblivion, in this infinitely more important case, may seem surprising. But those "Minnelieder" (Love-songs) and Provençal Madrigals were the Court Poetry of that time, and gained honour in high places; while the old National Traditions were common property and plebeian, and to sing them an unrewarded labour.

Whoever he may be, let him have our gratitude, our love. Looking back with a farewell glance, over that wondrous old Tale, with its many-coloured texture "of joyances and high-tides, of weeping and of woe," so skilfully yet artlessly knit-up into a whole, we cannot but repeat that a true epic spirit lives in it; that in many ways it has meaning and charms for us. Not only as the oldest Tradition of Modern Europe, does it possess a high antiquarian interest; but farther, and even in the shape we now see it under, unless the "Epics of the Son of Fingal" had some sort of authenticity, it is our oldest Poem also; the earliest product of these New Ages, which on its own merits, both in form and essence, can be named Poetical. Considering its chivalrous, romantic tone, it may rank as a piece of literary composition, perhaps considerably higher than the Spanish "Cid"; taking in its historical significance, and deep ramifications into the remote Time, it ranks indubitably and greatly higher.

It has been called a Northern "Iliad"; but except in the fact that both Poems have a narrative character, and both sing "the destructive rage" of men, the two have scarcely any similarity. The Singer of the "Nibelungen" is a far different person from Homer; far inferior both in culture and in genius. Nothing of the glowing imagery, of the fierce bursting energy, of the mingled fire and gloom, that dwell in the old Greek, makes its appearance here. The German Singer is comparatively a simple nature; has never penetrated deep into life; never "questioned Fate;" or struggled with fearful mysteries; of all which we find traces in Homer, still more in Shakespeare; but with meek believing sub-

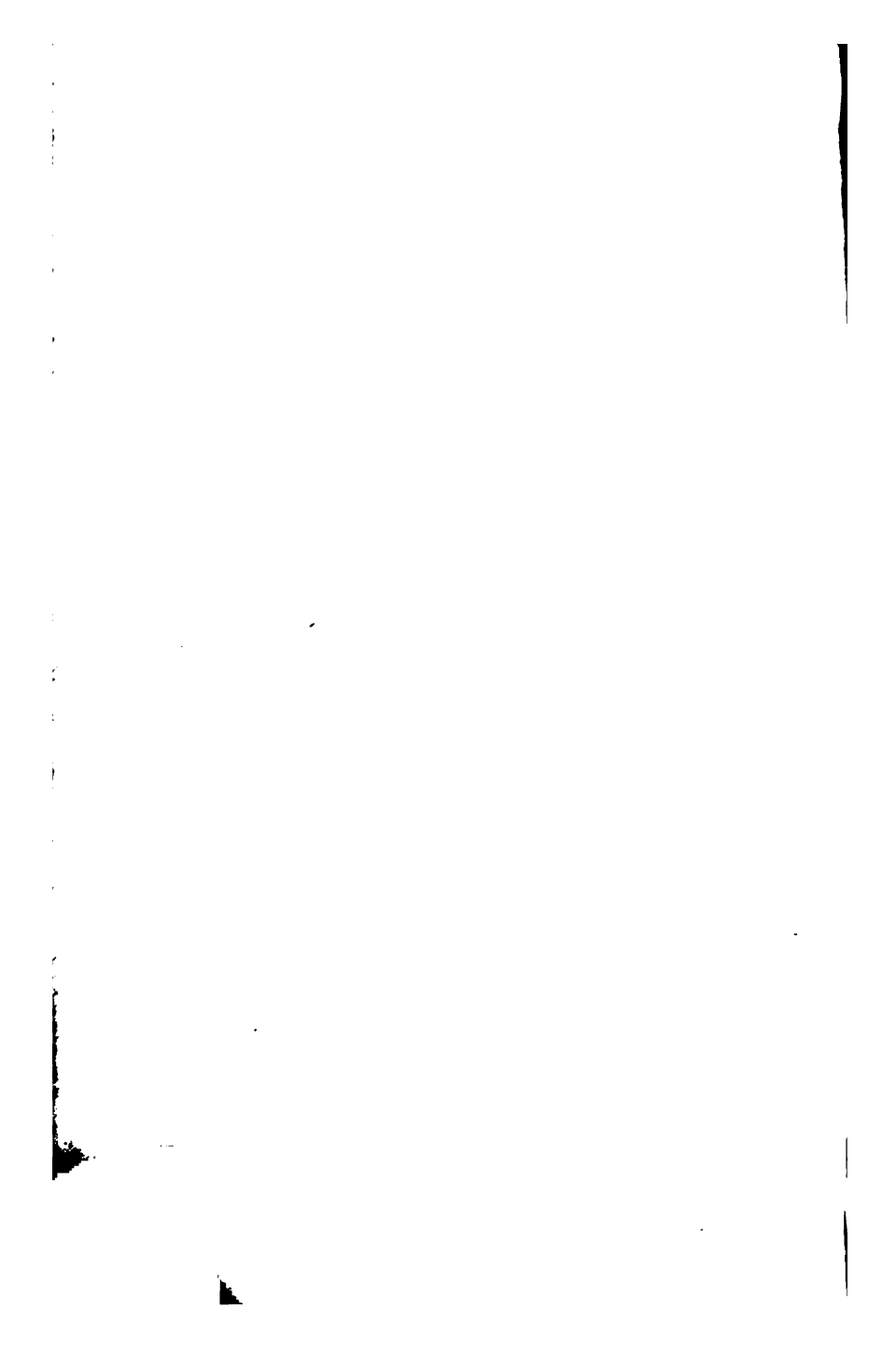
mission, has taken the Universe as he found it represented to him; and rejoices with a fine childlike gladness in the mere outward shows of things. He has little power of delineating character; perhaps he had no decisive vision thereof. His persons are superficially distinguished, and not altogether without generic difference; but the portraiture is imperfectly brought out; there lay no true living original within him. He has little Fancy; we find scarcely one or two similitudes in his whole Poem; and these one or two, which moreover are repeated, betoken no special faculty that way. He speaks of the "moon among stars;" says often, of sparks struck from steel armour in battle, and so forth, that they were *wie es wehte der wind*, "as if the wind were blowing them." We have mentioned Tasso along with him; yet neither in this case is there any close resemblance; the light playful grace, still more the Italian pomp and sunny luxuriance of Tasso are wanting in the other. His are humble wood-notes wild; no nightingale's, but yet a sweet sky-hidden lark's. In all the rhetorical gifts, to say nothing of rhetorical attainments, we should pronounce him even poor.

Nevertheless, a noble soul he must have been, and furnished with far more essential requisites for Poetry than these are; namely, with the heart and feeling of a Poet. He has a clear eye for the Beautiful and True; all unites itself gracefully and compactly in his imagination: it is strange with what careless felicity he winds his way in that complex Narrative, and, be the subject what it will, comes through it unsullied, and with a smile. His great strength is an unconscious instinctive strength; wherein truly lies his highest merit. The whole spirit of Chivalry, of Love, and heroic Valour, must have lived in him and inspired him. Everywhere he shows a noble Sensibility; the sad accents of parting friends, the lamentings of women, the high daring of men, all that is worthy and lovely prolongs itself in melodious echoes through his heart. A true old Singer, and taught of Nature herself! Neither let us call him an inglorious Milton, — now he is no longer a mute one. What good were it that

the four or five Letters composing his name could be printed, and pronounced, with absolute certainty? All that was mortal in him is gone utterly; of his life, and its environment, as of the bodily tabernacle he dwelt in, the very ashes remain not: like a fair heavenly Apparition, which indeed he *was*, he has melted into air, and only the Voice he uttered, in virtue of its inspired gift, yet lives and will live.

To the Germans this "Nibelungen Song" is naturally an object of no common love; neither if they sometimes overvalue it, and vague antiquarian wonder is more common than just criticism, should the fault be too heavily visited. After long ages of concealment, they have found it in the remote wilderness, still standing like the trunk of some almost antediluvian oak; nay with boughs on it still green, after all the wind and weather of twelve hundred years. To many a patriotic feeling, which lingers fondly in solitary places of the Past, it may well be a rallying-point, and "*Lovers' Trysting-tree.*"

For us also it has its worth. A creation from the old ages, still bright and balmy, if we visit it; and opening into the first History of Europe, of Mankind. Thus all is not oblivion; but on the edge of the abyss that separates the Old world from the New, there hangs a fair Rainbow-land; which also, in curious repetitions of itself (*twice* over, say the critics), as it *were* in a secondary and even a ternary reflex, sheds some feeble twilight far into the deeps of the primeval Time.



In vil grozen eren dar
si al wart: wonden si mit ein
andere waz an dar sibenste iart: di ar
choneginn eines künig was genesen.
des chynde der künich eel nimmer
vrälicher wesen.

Si wolde mit erwynden sine vürbe
sinn dar getuotet vürbe dar eel
chint: nach cristenlichem rehte ez wart
Ostrop genant: des wart vil muchel
fride vür eilv feda lant.

Si waz ir got: tugende an yvovn hede
lich: der vlez sich in vrov cheneht
die nach vil manigen tuch: di siro silene
Herru diu allende waz: diu herte
genleche nach Helechen groz lant.

Den vrenden vür den chyniden was si
vil wol bechag: di liden dar nie vrowe
belete ein künigef lant: bezher vnde
müer dar heren si für wart: dar lop
si truch si gen Hivnen vür an dar
cheide lant.

Hu her si wol erchinnen dar ir namen
wider stant: also nach fursten vöbe
chonegers rechen vunt: vür dar si alle
zweil chynige vür ir lach: si
gedabt: ouch manigen lido der ir da
hame gesach.

Si gedabt ouch manigen eren von gube
longe lant: der si dar vus gewalt vür
di ir Hagenen lant: mit der beside
hete gar benomen: ob im dar noch im
mer von ir celate mohte chomen.

Sez geliche obich in mohte bin
gen in dar lant: ir vrovne dar ir ge
inge vil viche an der hant: Giselher
ir brüder si chvten: zaller stant: vil
oite in senften flache si vure in ar
baren chvnt.

Ech vurne der vöbe valant: Orienbilde
vaz getet: dar si sich mit frumlebe
te von Giselher seht: den si durch
sine chvste in vüronden lant: do be
gunde ir aber salven von heizen tre
ben ir gewant.

Ez lig ir an dem heren spaz: vü vrov
wi nien si ane sehvde brüder dar zu
dar si vöbe munden anen hadenliche
man: vür di her ir Hagenen vür Gva
der gen.

Des willen un heren chom si vil sel
ton: abe gedabt ich pün so riche vür
hant groze habet: dar ich munden vür
den gevege noch an lant: des vure er
ich von tronege hagen gerne bereit.
Hach den geritten wüest diehe dar
herre nien: di mir da leide nachmich
ez ich in den sin: so vürbe wol troche
mines vrendes lip: des ich chvne er
beut sprach dar eelen vnp.

Elebe si do heren alle skönigef man
di Orienbilde rechen dar vus vil wol
getat: der chameren der pflich sebe
wart: di von er frum gewan: den Gva
hilde willen ebende nimen vürstas.

Si vürbe zallen ziten ich vil den
chvnech püen: dar er ir des gonde
mit gütchen sin: dar man ir frunde
beide in der Hivnen lant: der argen

Swillen nimen ander chvnequin erant:
di si anes nabet: bi dem chvnege lach
mit armen vmb wangen her er si als
er pflich: di eelen vrovnen munden
si vus in also sin lip: do gedabt ir
sinde dar vil herliche vnp.

Si sprach zu dem chvnege vil lieber
berre nun: ich wolde noch brüen gerne
moht iz mit hilden sin: dar ir mich
lieter seht ob ich dar her ver fote:
ob ir den munden vrenden vure in noch
lieten holt.

Do sprach der künich nehe gettwe
was sin mit: ich bringe vich del vol
innen swa lip vnd got: den rechen
wider fote del miste ich seude han:
wande ich von vübe minne nebe
er frunde gewan.

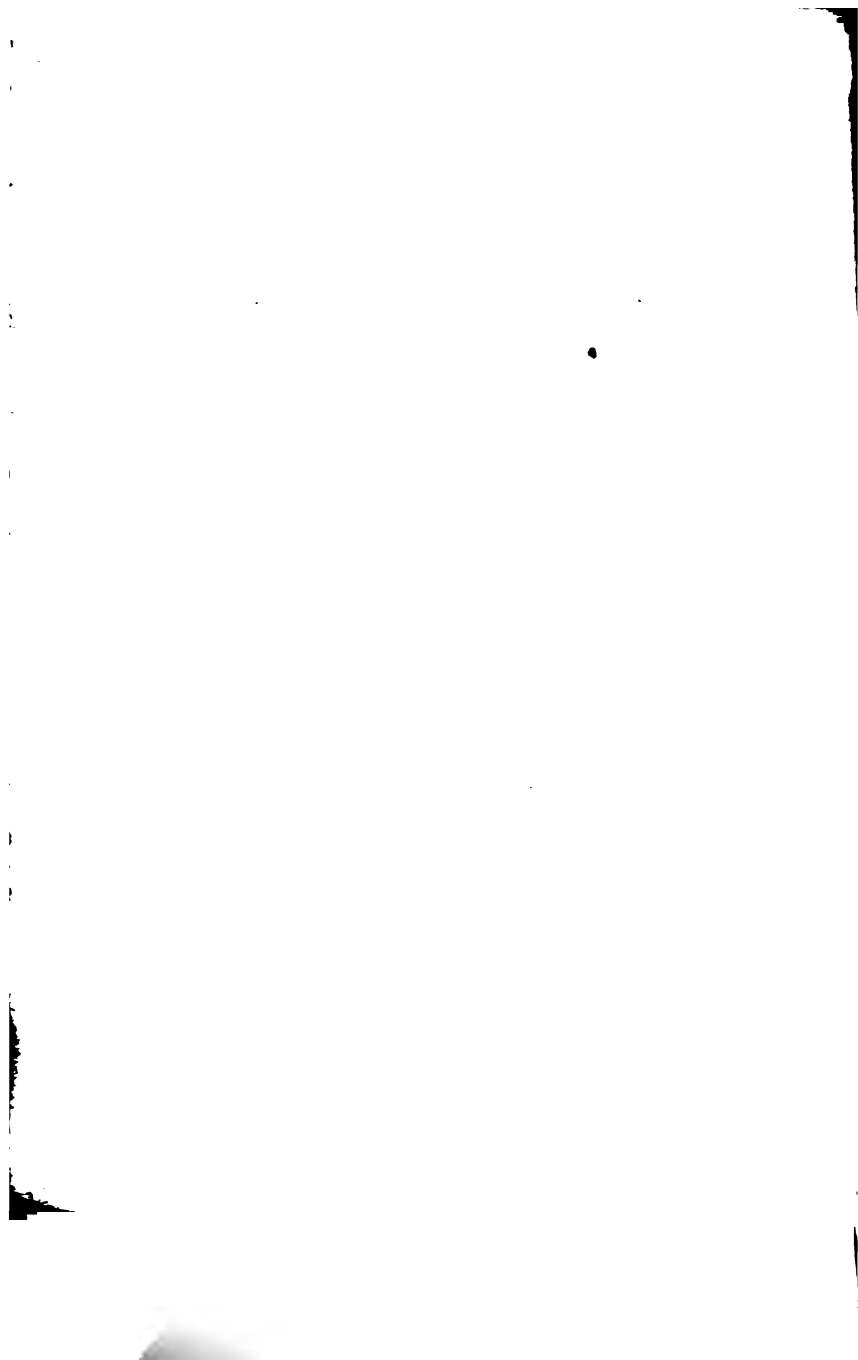
Do sprach diu chvneginne zu ilt: dar
wol getet: ich han vil hoher maged
dar vnde ist mir: so lant: dar mich
di so schen: ruchen hie gesehen: ich
höre nun di lute nimen für ellende
ichen.

Do sprach der chvnech eel vil liebr
vrowe min: vübe er si nien er vure
so lide ich über sin: swelhe ir da
gerne seht her in minas lant: des
vrote sich diu vrowe: do si den val
len sin erant.

Si sprach velt ir mit triveltsten
herre nun: so fote ir boren seiden
er wormen über sin: so enburt ich

MIT vil grozen eren daz ist al war
wonten si mit einander vnz an daz sibende iar
di zit diu chuneginne eines suns was genesen
des chunde der kunich Ecel nimmer vrölicher wesen.
Sine wolde niht erwinden sine vürbe sint
daz getouffet vürde daz Eceln chint
nach cristenlichem rehte ez wart Ortliep genant
des wart vil michel freude uber eliu Eceln lant.
Swaz ie guter tugende an vroun Helchen lach
der vleiz sich nu vrou Criemhilt dar nach vil manigen tach
di site si lerte Herrat diu ellende meit
diu hete tougenliche nach Helchen grosiu leit.
Den vremen den chunden was si vil wol bechant
di iahen daz nie vrouve beseze ein küneges lant
bezher unde milter daz heren si für war
daz lop si truch si een Hiunen unz an daz dricehende iar.
Nu het si wol erchunnen daz ir niemen wider stunt
also noch fursten wibe chüneges recken tunt
unt daz si alle zite zwelf chünige vor ir sach
si gedaht ouch maniger leide der ir da heime gesach.
Si gedaht ouch maniger eren von nibelunge lant
der si da was gewaltich unt di ir Hagenen hant
mit Sifrides tode hete gar benomen
ob im daz noch immer von ir celeide mohte chomen.
Sas geschaehe ob ich in möhte bringen in daz lant
ir troumte daz ir gienge vil diche an der hant
Giselher ir bruder si chusten zaller stunt
vil ofte in senftem slaffe sit wart in arbeiten chunt.
Ich vaene der ubel valint Criemhilde daz geriet
daz si sich mit frundschefte von Giselhere schiet
den si durch sune chuste in bürgonden lant
do begonde ir aber salwen von heizen trehen ir gewant.
Ez lag ir an dem herzen spate und vrou
wi man si ane schulde bræhte dar zu
daz si müse minnen einen heidenische man
di not di het ir Hagene unt Gunther getan.

*Transcript of the first column opposite, being the first nine
stanzas of ADVENTURE XXIII*



THE LAY OF THE NIBELUNGS.

ADVENTURE I.—KRIEMHILDA.

1.

TO us, in olden legends, is many a marvel told
Of praise-deserving heroes, of labours manifold,
Of weeping and of wailing, of joy and festival;
Of bold knights' battling shall you now hear a wondrous tale.

2.

There grew up in Burgundia a very noble maid,
No fairer face than hers was in all the lands, they said;
Kriemhilda was the maid's name,— a lovely woman she,—
For whose sake many a warrior lost his life gallantly.

3.

To love that lovely maiden seemed but to be her due;
None bore her spite, and many did for her favour sue.
Beyond all measure fair were her noble form and face:
Here virtues were sufficient, all womankind to grace.

4.

Three noble kings and wealthy, did guard her as their own,
Sir Gunther and Sir Gernot, for deeds of honour known,
And Giselher the youngest, a gallant warrior he.
The lady was their sister, and ward of all the three.

B

5.
These princes were right gentle, and came of noble race,
Bold, and of strength unequalled, peerless in knightly grace;
"The kingdom of Burgundia," thus was their country hight;—
All Etzel's land rang later with their great deeds of might.

6.
At Worms upon the Rhine flood, they dwelt in power and might,
And there, in fealty, served them full many a haughty knight,
With honourable service throughout their earthly life.—
That life had woeful ending from two great ladies' strife.

7.
Their mother was Dame Uté, a queen exceeding rich,
And Dankrat was their father, broad lands he left to each
When he this life departed; he was a mighty man,
Who, e'en while yet a stripling, his knightly deeds began.

8.
The three kings, who came after, were, as I've said before,
All men of strength and valour; and to them fealty swore
The flower of noble knighthood, of whom with truth 'twas said,
That strong they were and dauntless, in sharp fight undismayed.

9.
Foremost of them was Hagen, of Tronjé; then his brother,—
Sir Dankwart the swift-footed; Ortwein of Metz another;
And Eckewart and Gere, who both were margraves hight;
With Volker of Alsatia,— a stout and proven knight.

10.
Rumold the kitchen-master, a knight of high degree,
Sindold and Hunold also, whose duty 'twas to see
That courtly rites and honours were aye observéd well,
With many another gallant, whom time would fail to tell.

11.

Dankwart, he was the Marshal, his nephew Ortwein bore
The office of High Sewer, in that proud court of yore ;
Sir Sindold was Cup-bearer, and a bold knight men say,
The Chamberlain was Hunold ; all honourable they.

12.

Of all this courtly service, and of their far-famed might,
And of the worth and valour of each heroic knight,
And of their life as courtiers, through all their joyous days,
To give a true account were beyond my simple lays.

13.

Meanwhile, amid this splendour, the maid Kriemhilda dreamed
That she had reared a falcon,— strong, fair and wild he seem'd—
And that two eagles tore him, and eke before her eyes ;—
No worse grief could life bring her in any evil guise.

14.

Quick to her mother Uté she told the vision dread,—
Who, after her own manner, the dream interpreted :
“ This falcon of thy rearing, thy noble husband he,—
And now may God defend him, or he is lost to thee ! ”

15.

“ What sayest thou of husbands, O dearest mother mine ?
Never for hero's wooing shall I, your daughter, pine !
Spotless and fair would I be, as now, unto my death ;—
I would forego the sorrow that lurks man's love beneath.”

16.

“ Forswear not Love thus lightly,” her mother answer gave,
“ If heart's joy ever reach thee in life, as women crave,
Through man's love thou must gain it ;— thou wert a seemly bride
If God do not deny thee a good knight at thy side.”

17.

"Ah, let alone such counsel, my mother dear, I pray !
By many a woman's witness 'tis proven, clear as day,
How heart's delight too often with sorrow sore is paid ;—
Lest such mischance befall me, I'll shun them both," she said.

18.

So, in her mind Kriemhilda held ever Love at bay,
And lived in happy freedom for many a merry day ;—
Caring for nought and no one ;— and yet it was her fate
To be one day, in honour, a gallant warrior's mate.

19.

It was the self-same falcon that she in dreams did see,
Just as her mother told her ; and bloody was to be
Her vengeance on her kinsmen, by whom the deed was done :—
For one man's death did perish full many a mother's son.

ADVENTURE II.—SIEGFRIED.

20.

In Netherland was growing a rich king's son and heir,
Whose father's name was Siegmund, Sieglind his mother fair.
In a strong castle lived they, of far and widespread fame,
Beside the great Rhine river ; and Santen was its name.

21.

This prince's name was Siegfried, a gallant knight and good,
In many kingdoms proved he his brave and warlike mood ;
So great his strength of body, he rode from land to land.
Ha ! what fine warriors found he on the Burgundian strand !

22.

In his best days of prowess, when he was young and slim,
Full many a wondrous story the country told of him,—
How noble was his stature, how fair he was to see,—
And many a comely woman look'd on him lovingly.

23.

He had a careful rearing, as did his birth befit,
His virtues were his own, though, and nowise due to it !
Unto his father's country he was an ornament,
For men in all things found him to be right excellent.

24.

He was now grown so manly that he to court must ride ;—
The men-folk saw him gladly ; and dames and maids beside
Wished that his will might bring him, not once, but ever there ;—
Full many bore him favour, as well the knight was ware !

25.

To ride forth unattended the boy was ne'er allowed.
In costly raiment decked him Siegmund and Sieglind proud ;
And the wise elders taught him (as well they understood),
How best to win the people, and rule the land for good.

26.

And being now so stalwart that he could weapons bear,
Having what he requiréd, enough and e'en to spare,
He turned his thoughts to women, and dreamt of a fair bride :
The fairest might stand proudly at the bold Siegfried's side.

27.

Then did his father, Siegmund, summon his liegemen all
Unto a friendly banquet in the great castle-hall ;
To many a neighbour-king's land the festal tidings spread ;
On strangers as on kinsmen steeds, gear, he lavished.

34.

Soon ran the knights to where they found saddled chargers wait;
At Siegmund's court began then a tournament so great
That one heard hall and palace with crash of arms resound,
As the high-mettled thanes met upon the tilting-ground.

35.

From old knights and from young ones went thrust and parry there,
Till crash of breaking lances re-echoed through the air ;—
One saw the splinters flying up to the palace wall
From many a gallant knight's hand : so eager were they all !

36.

The host he bade them end it ; they led the steeds away ;
Full many a sturdy buckler in sight all broken lay ;
And precious stones, in plenty, had fallen on the sward
From out the shining shield-clasps : the onset was so hard.

37.

Then went the host's guests thither where they were bade to sit ;
Their weariness was banished by the choice food they ate,
And by wine of the rarest, of which there was no stint.
Alike to friends and strangers was all this lavishment.

38.

And, though the games and pastimes had lasted all the day,
The throngs of merrymakers knew neither rest nor stay,
Contending for the many good gifts that were to hand :
A bounty which redounded to the praise of Siegmund's land.

39.

Then did the king make over to young Siegfried, the loan
Of both his lands and castles, as he afore had done.
Unto his knightly comrades he gave with open hand,
So all were right well-pleaséd that they had sought his land.

40.

Until the seventh sunrise the festival went on.
 Then did the rich queen, Sieglind, as in old days was done,
 For love of her son Siegfried, share out her red gold free :
 To win all folks' hearts to him thereby, in sooth, hoped she.

41.

Not one who in the games played, methinks, went poor away ;
 It rained steeds and raiment through all the land that day.
 As if had come the world's end, and common life was o'er !
 Such gifts, in such abundance, were never known before ;

42.

So, with befitting honour, ended the festal day.
 And some of the rich nobles were overheard to say,
 That they would like the young man, Prince Siegfried, for their lord :
 Howbeit the honest Siegfried, gave heed not to their word.

43.

While Siegmund and Sieglinda were living, their dear son
 Would never dream of wearing the crown for any one !
 He wished to be lord only the mighty to restrain,
 Who kept the land in terror,— the bold and gallant thane !

ADVENTURE III.—HOW SIEGFRIED CAME TO WORMS.

44.

The Prince was little troubled by pangs of heartache yet !
 The people's talk, however, ere long his ears beset :
 How there was in Burgundia a maiden, passing fair ;—
 For her sake joy and sorrow thereafter he did bear.

45.

The beauty of this maiden was famed far and wide ;
Her lofty mind, 'twas vaunted, excelled her beauty's pride,
And brought her many a wooer, riding to Gunther's land,
Who fain would see the damsel, and bid for that fair hand.

46.

And yet, however many contended for her love,
Kriemhilda felt in secret that none her heart could move ;
There was no man among them whose love she could reward ;
That knight was still a stranger, who was to be her lord.

47.

But when the son of Sieglind to lofty love inclined,
Compared with his, all wooing was as an idle wind !
Right well, in sooth, deserved he to win so fair a bride :
Erelong the noble Kriemhild' stood at bold Siegfried's side.

48.

His followers and kinsmen, seeing that he would wed,
Did counsel that the maiden he to the altar led
Should be by birth his equal,— for his, and for their sake :
“Then,” cried the gallant Siegfried, “Kriemhilda will I take !

49.

“That beauteous young maiden of the Burgundian land,
For her surpassing beauty. Right well I understand
No Kaiser were so mighty but, should he need a wife,
That princess were fit consort to share his royal life.”

50.

A rumour of the matter soon reached King Siegmund's ears
(’Twas buzzed among the people) ; his mind was full of fears
For this his son's intention ;— that he was fain to wed
The fair and lovely maiden, and would not be gainsaid.

The march's wife,
 About her dear son's life;
 And his bold warrior-train,
 And that his wooing vain.

"Fleeced father mine,
 Will it be design
 To have me heart its way,
 With what men may say.

"The king said, 'verily
 He will not touch me;
 He will not touch me;
 He will not touch me.'

"The king said, 'verily
 He will not touch me;
 He will not touch me;
 He will not touch me.'

"The king said, 'verily
 He will not touch me;
 He will not touch me;
 He will not touch me.'

"The king said, 'verily
 He will not touch me;
 He will not touch me;
 He will not touch me.'

57.

"By force can never any expect to win the maid,"
Declared the good King Siegmund; "that hath been always said!
But if thou with thy warriors wilt to her country ride,
An' we have any friends left, I'll call them to thy side."

58.

"Far be it from my purpose," cried Siegfried, eagerly,
"That when I ride to Rhine-land warriors should follow me,
Like an invading army! I should abhor this thing—
By force the glorious maiden into my arms to bring!"

59.

"I will not owe her winning to any other hand;
I and eleven others will ride to Gunther's land.
Your help, good father Siegmund, I, for this purpose, pray."
Then gave they to his warriors both coloured stuffs and gray.

60.

His mother heard the tidings, the lady Siegelind,
She fell to grieving over her dear son in her mind;
Fearing lest she might lose him through some of Gunther's men.
The noble queen refrained not from bitter weeping then.

61.

This seeing, young lord Siegfried to her his way did make,
And unto his dear mother thus tenderly he spake:
"I prithee weep not, lady, because of mine intent;
I have no fear of foemen, nor of disparagement."

62.

"Aid thou me in my journey to the Burgundian land,
That I and my companions may bravely furnished stand
In raiment that shall honour proud heroes, such as we,—
Then will I for this favour, aye thank thee fervently."

63.

"Since thou wilt not forego it," did Siegelind declare,
"I'll help thee on thy journey, my only son and heir !
I will provide apparel, the best e'er warrior wore,—
For thee and thy companions : and ye must take good store."

64.

Then bowed to the queen-mother Prince Siegfried, the young man,
He said : "On this my journey I'll take, if so I can,
None save eleven warriors ; for these be raiment made.
I long to see how fares it with Kriemhilda," he said.

65.

So Sieglind's beauteous ladies sat stitching, night and day,—
There were no idle fingers, and little rest or play,
Until Prince Siegfried's raiment was ready to his hand.
He'd not forego his journey to the Burgundian land.

66.

His father bade him polish his knightly harness grand,
Wherewith he meant to ride out of royal Siegmund's land,
And eke the glitt'ring hauberks they likewise did prepare,
Together with stout helmets, and bucklers broad and fair.

67.

The hour of their departure for Burgundy was nigh,
And men as well as women watched them forebodingly,
Lest they again should never come to their fatherland.
To pack their gear and armour the heroes gave command.

68.

Their chargers were resplendent, their trappings of red gold ;
No knight could well be prouder nor had more right to hold
A high head, than Sir Siegfried and his eleven men.
He craved the king's permission to gallop Rhinewards then.

69.

With grief Siegmund and Sieglind accorded his request ;
Whom Siegfried sought to comfort, as tenderly he pressed.
He said : " Ye must not weep now through any care for me ;
And fear not lest my life be in any jeopardy."

70.

Sad-hearted were the warriors, and many a maiden wept :
Doubtless their hearts foreboded mischance for those who leapt
That day into the saddle,— they dreamt these friends lay dead,—
They had good cause for mourning, in sooth there was much need !

71.

Upon the seventh morning, at Worms, on the Rhine shore,
Arrived the gallant horsemen ; the raiment that they wore
With ruddy gold was flashing, and all their trappings shone :
The chargers of bold Siegfried went pacing smoothly on.

72.

Their bucklers were new-wrought ones, and light and broad beside,
And bright their helmets glittered, as unto court did ride
Siegfried, the gallant chieftain, in royal Gunther's land.
Such fine-apparelled heroes were ne'er seen on that strand.

73.

Their long-swords' points hung downwards unto the spurst they wore ;
And sharp, too, were the javelins which these bold heroes bore.
The one that Siegfried carried was two spans in the blade,
Its twofold edge was deadly, and ghastly wounds it made.

74.

All gilded were the bridles they lightly held in hand ;
And silken were their horse-girths ; so came they to that land.
The folk began on all sides on them to gape and stare,
Then many of Gunther's people ran forth to meet them there.

75.

Those high and mighty warriors, and knight as well as squire,
Went out to bid them welcome, as honour did require,
Receiving them with kindness into their master's land,
Taking their horses, straightway, and bucklers from their hand.

76.

They would have ta'en the chargers, and led them to the stall,
Had not the gallant Siegfried said out, before them all :
"Let mine and my men's horses stay here, as now they be,—
It is my will and purpose to ride hence presently !

77.

"I pray you therefore tell me— whoever knows this thing
Let him not hide it from me— where I can find your king,
Gunther, the mighty monarch of the Burgundian land ?"
Then one among them told him, who knew where he did stand.

78.

"If you would find King Gunther, 'tis easy done, I trow,
In yonder hall I saw him, and thither you must go ;
He stands among his heroes ; and, if you'll thither wend,
Full many a glorious warrior you'll find with him, good friend !"

79.

Unto the king the tidings by this time had been told :
How warriors were arrivéd all gallant to behold,
Who wore white, glitt'ring mail-shirts, and raiment rich and grand,
And no one knew aught of them, in that Burgundian land.

80.

Then was the king astonished, and much he did inquire,
When he came these splendid warriors, in dazzling bright attire,
Such well-wrought bucklers, so new and eke so broad ;—
The soul of Gunther that none could give him word.

81.

Then Ortwein, lord of Metz, spake, and answered thus the king
(Rich and high-couraged was he, and feared not anything):
"Since we know naught about them, bid someone straightway go
And fetch my uncle Hagen, he'll see them, and may know.

82.

"He knoweth all the kingdoms, and ev'ry stranger-land,
And, if he wot aught of them, he'll make us understand."
So the king sent to fetch him, him and his liegemen all;—
They watched his stately coming, with warriors, to the hall.

83.

What the king wanted of him? first, Hagen sought to know.
"There are within my palace strange warriors, I trow,
Whom not a soul here knoweth; if thou didst them e'er see,
Declare it now, Sir Hagen, and tell the truth to me!"

84.

"That will I," answered Hagen, and to the window went;
One saw his keen glance wander, till on the guests it bent.
Well pleased him their equipment, and raiment equally:
But they were strangers to him, ne'er seen in Burgundy.

85.

He spake: "From whencesoever have come these cavaliers,
They must themselves be princes, or princes' messengers.
Their raiment is so splendid, their horses are so good;—
'Tis plain, where'er they come from, they are of noble blood.

86.

"And," furthermore said Hagen, "though hitherto, I ween
The famous hero Siegfried, mine eyes have never seen,
I cannot help believing, how strange soe'er it be,
That yon proud knight, there standing, can be none else but he!

87.

"He bringeth us new tidings, here into this our land.
The hardy Niblungs slew he with his own hero-hand,
Both Nibelung and Schilbung, the sons of a rich king.
He hath wrought mighty wonders, by sheer strength vanquishing.

88.

"For riding once, all lonely, and with no help at hand,
He came unto a mountain, (as I did understand,)
Where lay the Niblungs' treasure, well watched by doughty men,
Who all were strangers to him, until he met them then.

89.

"The treasure of the Niblungs had just been taken then
Out of a hollow mountain,— (Now hearken, my good men !)
While as the Niblung warriors to share it did prepare,
Young Siegfried came, and saw them: and had good cause to stare.

90.

"He came so nigh unto them that he could see them all,
And they did also see him;— then one of them did call:
'Here comes the mighty Siegfried, the Netherlander strong!'
He met with strange adventures the Nibelungs among.

91.

"The knight was well received by Schilbung and Nibelung;
And with one voice in counsel those noble lords and young
Cried: 'Share for us the treasure, thou honourable man!'
And eagerly besought him: so he to share began.

92.

"He saw so many jewels as I have heard men say,
That fivescore waggons scarcely would carry them away;
There was of red gold, from out the Nib'lungs' land:
It must be divided by gallant Siegfried's hand.

93.

' And unto him for wages they gave the Niblungs' sword :
But little they foreboded what would be their reward
For rendering this service to Siegfried, the good knight ;—
Ere he could end the sharing they had begun to fight.

94.

' They had their friends anear them, twelve gallant arméd men,
Who all were mighty giants,— but what availed them then ?
For Siegfried fell upon them and slew them in his ire,
Full seven hundred Niblungs, vanquished in battle dire,

95.

" With their good sword resistless, that was yclept ' Balmung.'
Because a mighty terror had seized those warriors young,
Dread of the sword, and of the bold man that did it wield ;—
Soon land and castles did they unto the victor yield.

96.

" The wealthy kings he also slew, till they both fell dead.
But he himself, through Albrich, was grievously bested,
Who would avenge his masters upon the spot,—till he
Found the great strength of Siegfried beyond his mastery.

97.

" The sturdy dwarf was powerless against him in the fray.
Like lions wild to the mountain they twain then broke away,
Till the Tarnhelm¹ from Albrich he wrested ; and thus lord
Became the dreaded Siegfried of all the Niblung hoard.

98.

" They who had dared to fight lay upon the mountain, slain.
The treasure then he bade them to carry back again
Unto the cave, whence erstwhile the Niblungs did it take.
And then did he stout Albrich his treasure-keeper make.

¹ The Hood of Darkness or Invisibility.

III.

The king did greatly marvel, and eke his liegemen all,
 At the strange declaration that from his lips did fall :
 To take his kingdom from him ! so that was his intent !
 His thanes all heard it, likewise, and fierce was their dissent.

III2.

"Whereby have I deserved this?" Gunther the warrior cried,
 "That lands my father governed, with honour, till he died,
 Should be now wrested from us by force, by whomsoe'er?
 That were to prove but poorly that we too knighthood bear."

III3.

"Nought else will I," quoth Siegfried, "by that I fall or stand :
 If thy strength cannot peace win for thine own fatherland,
 Then shall my strong hand rule it, and after me mine heir ;
 If thou dost win, thine be it, and we thy rule must bear.

III4.

"Thy heritage, mine also, are now alike at stake ;
 Whichever of the other shall wholly conquest make
 To him shall all be subject,— the land and all its folk."
 But Hagen and King Gernot in hasty answer spoke :

III5.

"Far be it from our purpose," spake Gernot presently,
 To conquer new possessions, and to cause death thereby
 On hands of heroes ; truly, we have a rich estate :
 It which pays us due allegiance, nor seeks a better fate."

III6.

Theynd and about were standing his friends, in sullen mood ;
 That^{lord} of Metz, Sir Ortwein, among the others stood ;
 Well^{spake} : "This friendly parley doth vex me sore, as knight,—
 So say^{Siegfried} unprovoked hath here challenged you to fight.

95

The host and all his warriors welcomed the guest so well
That nothing in good meaning was lacking, soon to tell.
The goodly hall in his hall bowed low before them there,
And thenceforth men of that dwelling so friendly and so dear.

100.

"I marvel at these tidings," spake Gunther, suddenly;
"Whence have you come, Siegfried, come into this country?
And for what purpose come you to Worms upon the Rhine?
The guest that the king said: 'To answer him, be mine.'

107.

"To me were told the tidings, erst in my chamber;
That here with you were dwelling— which I thought was true."
The boldest of all warriors— oft said he to his men—
That ever monarch governed: "Lo, I am come to you."

113.

"Thy fame hath also reached me," said the king;
"That never king was bolder nor braver than thou."
Such is the common folk-talk— yet I shall have no quiet
And I shall have no quiet— till I have thee slain."

118.

"I also am a warrior," said the king;
"And I shall have no quiet— till I have thee slain."
Until I have thee slain—

be wrath,
me forth,
et that be!
jury."

of men,
lagen,
strong right hand
ndian land."

III.
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At the strange declaration that from his lips did fall :
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II6.
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Sir Ortwein, among the others stood ;
" Friendly parley doth vex me sore, as knight,—
Provoked hath here challenged you to fight."

117.

"If you and your two brethren were here, without defence,
And if he brought against you the army of a prince,
Methinks I could o'ermaster yea, e'en such doughty one!
And force this haughty warrior to change his braggart tone."

118.

This saying stirred fierce anger in him of Netherland.
He spake: "Ne'er shalt thou measure against my like thine hand!
I am a mighty king's son, and thou but a king's knight:
Twelve such as thou art could not withstand me in the fight!"

119.

Ortwein, the lord of Metz, then for swords called, lustily;
Of Hagen, lord of Tronjé, the sister's son was he;
That he had held his peace still seemed not to Gunther right.
But Gernot put his word in, the bold and ready knight.

120.

He thus spake unto Ortwein: "Now let thine anger be!
Siegfried hath not yet done us aught evil that I see,
Our difference in goodwill we yet may end, I deem,
And thus may gain his friendship; 'twill better us beseem."

121.

Then spake the doughty Hagen: "Well do we to be wrath,
Both we, and all thy warriors, for hath he not come forth,
Here to the Rhine, to flout us? he might have let that be!
My own good lords had never done him such injury."

122.

To this made answer Siegfried, that mightiest of men,
"If what I now have spoken offend you, Sir Hagen,
You shall have eye-proof, shortly, how this my strong right hand
Shall do great deeds of prowess in this Burgundian land."

135.

When he, among the heroes,
Between the games, at leisure,
So winsomely he stood there,
That the heart's love of many
down in the court-yard stood,
as other warriors would ;
Queen Siegelinda's son,
a noble dame he won.

136.

And many a time he pondered : " How shall I e'er attain
To see the noble damsel, whose love I seek to gain,
Her whom I love so dearly, and have for many a day?
To me she's still a stranger, with sorrow I must say."

137.

When'er the kings were minded to ride throughout their land,
Their vassal knights had ever to follow, close at hand ;
And Siegfried must be with them, which did the maid distress,
And he too suffered often, for her dear sake, no less.

138.

So dwelt he with the three kings (and 'tis all true you hear,
In Gunther's court and country, the space of one whole year ;
And all that time his Lady he never saw at all,
Through whom much love unto him and sorrow did befall.

ADVENTURE IV.—HOW SIEGFRIED FOUGHT THE SAXONS.

139.

And now, behold, strange tidings have come to Gunther's land,
 And herakis from a distance arrive at the command
 Of warriors unheard of and yet who hatred bore.
 And when the three kings heard it their grief, in sooth, was sore.

140.

These warriors' names I'll tell you : the first was Lud'ger hight,
Out of the Saxon country, a rich king of great might ;
And Ludegast came with him, who was of Denmark king ;—
These twain brought many with them, a princely following.

141.

To Gunther's land the heralds their ready steps had bent,
Whom those kings, his opponents, had with their message sent.
The unknown men were questioned as to the news they brought,
And, summoned by King Gunther, the royal presence sought.

142.

The king did greet them fairly ; " Be welcome here," quoth he,
" Though who hath sent you hither is yet unknown to me :
That must I hear now of you," declared the monarch good.
Exceedingly they feared King Gunther's angry mood.

143.

" If thou, O king, allowest, the message we'll reveal
Which we are sent to bring thee, and nothing will conceal.
We'll name to you the masters who've sent us to this strand :
Lud'gast and Lud'ger, namely, who would invade your land.

144.

" Ye have incurred their anger, nor shun we here to state
That both our masters harbour for you the greatest hate.
They mean to come with armies to Worms upon the Rhine :
And many warriors aid them ;— so warn we thee and thine.

145.

" Within twelve weeks their journey must here accomplished be,
If you've good friends to help you, you'll seek them speedily
To guard your land and castles, and fight in battlefield.
By them will here be cloven full many a helm and shield.

146.

"Ye five will treat with them, so make your offer: then
 They will not bring upon you their hosts of armed men,
 All honor does unto you, to work you grievous woe,
 Destroying your fair knighthood with many a deadly blow."

147.

"Now arise here a little," replied the monarch good,
 "Until I have bethought me,— then shall ye learn my mood.
 If I have doubtful subjects I must not hide this thing;
 This grievous errand must I unto my lieges bring."

148.

Roch as he was to Gunther it was a trouble sore;
 Within his heart the matter he pondered o'er and o'er.
 He sent in quest of Hagen, and others of his men,
 And bade them from the palace to fetch King Gernot then.

149.

His worstiest came unto him, all that were found to hand.
 He spake: "The foe-man cometh here into this our land,
 Bringing a mighty army: to work you all much woe."
 To which the bold knight Gernot made answer: "Nay, not so,

150.

"Our good swords shall defend us!" undaunted Gernot said;
 "None but the doomed die, ever,— and they're as good as dead!
 For fear of death, I'll never forget mine honour dear.
 Let the foe come, and welcome! they'll find us ready here!"

151.

Then Hagen spake, of Tronjé: "The thing doth bode no good;
 Lud'gast and Lud'ger both are too arrogant of mood.
 The time's too short to gather, and furnish all our men;
 Ye must advise with Siegfried." Thus spake the bold Hagen.

152.

They bade men take the heralds, and lodge them in the town.
However hostile to them, for sake of his renown
Gunther would have them cared for, as was their due and right;
Until he knew what friends would stand by him in the fight.

153.

Yet the king's heart was heavy and sad with anxious care.
But one beheld him mourning,— a gallant knight and fair,
Who knew not of the sorrow that had befall'n the king;—
Therefore besought he Gunther to declare to him this thing.

154.

"To me it is a marvel," quoth Siegfried (for 'twas he),
"How all your merry custom hath changéd utterly,
Which was the rule among us, and hath so long held sway?"
To which, in answer, Gunther, the comely knight did say:

155.

"Not unto every comer would I the grief declare,
Which close within my bosom in secret I must bear:
One keeps one's deepest sorrow for stedfast friends," he said.
At this did Siegfried's colour change quick, 'twixt white and red.

156.

"I never have denied you," he spake unto the king;—
"And shall not, in this trouble, my strong arm succour bring?
If you for friends are seeking, lo, am I not your friend?
I trust to be so ever,— with honour, till mine end."

157.

"Now God reward you, Siegfried, for what you now have said.
And though your strength should never be needed in mine aid,
Yet doth this news rejoice me, that you my friend will be;—
And you shall ne'er regret it, if life be granted me.

171.

"But we shall meet in season wherefore I now am sad :
 Your message to me is this message I have had :
 That you will with your armies assail us, at our door ;—
 The day is written over this in these lands before."

172.

"You are not here to reason, much Siegfried, thereunto ;
 I shall make our answer plain and as I pray you, do !
 I have to say to you this honour and vantage both,
 That we will stand with you in all you, nothing loth."

173.

"I thought that might be said should have at their command
 You have promised me this yet would I them withstand,
 I thought that you would say at least this all to me."
 "You are not here to reason, much Siegfried, thereunto ;
 I shall make our answer plain and as I pray you, do !
 I have to say to you this honour and vantage both,
 That we will stand with you in all you, nothing loth."

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 I have to say to you this honour and vantage both,
 That we will stand with you in all you, nothing loth."

175.

"But this must Siegfried see to his nephew Orwein too,
 Houndwax and Sinswad and all knights beloved of you.
 And Vukke shall meet with us to take the gallant man,
 A better one I know not and he shall lead the van."

176.

"And let the heralds take home to their masters' land ;
 And that they soon shall see to give them to understand,
 That peace within our castles may undisturbed reign."
 For followers and kinsmen the king then sent again.

164.

he messengers of Lud'ger straightway to court repair.
 t news of home-returning greatly rejoiced they were.
 he good King Gunther gave them rich gifts to take away,
 and promised them safe conduct: right glad of heart were they.

165.

' Say now," King Gunther bade them, "unto my foes who come,
 They'd best forego this journey, and stay content at home.
 But, if they be determined to seek me in my land,
 Unless my good friends fail me, they'll find their work to hand."

166.

Rich presents then they, straightway, before the heralds bore,
 Gunther was rich in treasure, and had enough and more;
 These men of Lud'ger's durst not refuse the offered fee,
 And when they leave had taken, departed joyfully.

167.

Now when they unto Denmark returnéd were at last,
 And had declared the tidings unto King Ludegast,
 Which they had brought from Rhineland, and all to him was said,
 The proud and haughty answer filled him with grief and dread.

168.

They said that by the Rhine dwelt full many a gallant wight:
 "Among them, with King Gunther, there was a certain knight,
 Who bore the name of Siegfried,— a knight of Netherland."
 Sore grieved was Lud'gast when he this news did understand.

169.

As soon as they of Denmark had heard the news of war,
 They made all haste to gather their friends from near and far,
 Till Ludegast could reckon on twenty-thousand men,
 All warriors bold, and ready the war-march to begin.

King Ludwig the German ~~was~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~1900~~
 Will be had very important ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~here~~ ~~to~~ ~~show~~,
 Ready to join the others, ~~the~~ ~~time~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~city~~.
 Nor was King Ludwig able ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~his~~ ~~be~~

Sent word to all his captains, and to his friends' men,
 To bid their troops assemble in goodly array;
 And likewise Hagen's warriors — the best of them all.
 Whereby much many a chieftain in battle hereafter, fall.

So made they all things ready. When ~~parted~~ was each plan,
The gallant warrior, Volker, ~~was laid to rest~~ the van,
And thus they rode together from ~~Worms~~ ~~from~~ the Rhine.
The chief command to Hagen of ~~Trent~~ ~~the~~ ~~mission~~.

With them did ride Sir Simold, and the brave Hunold,
Two knights of whom was either well worth King Gunther's gold ;
And Dankwart, Hagen's brother, his nephew Orwein too,
Who also might with honour upon the war-march go.

174-
"Sir king," said Siegfried, "pricthee, in quiet bide at home,
that all thy warriors with me to battle come,
to guard the women, and aye be of good cheer :
I can take care of your honour and your gear !

175.
From those who would assail you, at Worms upon the Rhine,
I'll see that nought of evil befall or thee or thine.
So closely will we press them, and compass them so near,
That all their gaggart boasting shall soon be changed to fear."

176.

From Rhine they rode through Hesse, their warriors as well,
Towards the Saxon country,— where they to fighting fell.
They ravaged all the borders and spoiled with sword and brand,
Till fear fell on those princes, who sorrowed for their land.

177.

So came they o'er the marches; their followers pressed on,
And then the gallant Siegfried began to think thereon:
"Whoshall defend our camp-folk, now we have brought them here?
More damage-wreaking raiders to Saxons never were."

178.

Some counselled: "On the march let bold Dankwart guard our youth;
He is a trusty warrior, and swift in act, forsooth:
Let him and also Ortwein have conduct of the rear;
So shall we have less damage from Lud'ger's men to fear."

179.

"Then I myself will ride on," did gallant Siegfried cry,
And keep the foremost outlook, till we the foe espy;
Until I find out where these same crafty warriors lurk."
Fair Sieglind's son then quickly donned helmet and hauberk.

180.

The rank and file to Hagen he entrusted as he went,
And also unto Gernot, the warrior excellent.
Then all alone forth rode he into the Saxon-land;
That very day his sword hewed full many a helmet-band.

181.

He saw a whole vast army upon the plain outspread,
By which his own few helpers were far outnumberéd:
There were full forty thousand, or even more, maybe;—
But when Sir Siegfried saw them, his heart was full of glee!

182.

On the foe's side a warrior had to the front been sent,
 Who on his guard stood ready, watchful and diligent.
 The hero Siegfried saw him, and the bold man saw him :
 And each did watch the other, with jealous hate and grim.

183.

I'll tell you who it was, who thus sentinel did stand :
 (A shining shield of red gold was hanging on his hand,)
 King Ludogast it was who his army thus did guard,—
 The noble guest spurred forward to meet him on the sward.

184.

King Ludogast had also his enemy espied,
 And each sharp spurs had driven into his stallion's side,
 With lances on the shields bent each charged with all his might,
 And Ludogast the mighty was soon in sorry plight.

185.

After the crash, the chargers bore the two princes by,
 As if a mighty storm-wind had blown them furiously,
 Till each, the rein obeying, was turned in knightly way ;
 Then did the two grim foemen with swords their skill essay.

186.

The mighty strokes of Siegfried made all the field resound,
 Until King Lud'gast's helmet seemed flaming all around,—
 The fire-red sun shot upwards beneath the hero's hand,
 Each knight and his fellow a foeman worth his brand.

187.

him also right many an ugly blow :
 caught the sword-thrusts, that else had laid

witness of the fray.
 Siegfried had gained the day.

188.

From three great wounds and ghastly, which to the king he dealt
 Clean through his white, steel harness; — though it was firmly welt,—
 Where the keen sword-point entered burst from his wounds
 The blood.

King Ludegast might well be thereat of doleful mood !

189.

He begged for life; and offered to pledge to him his land,
 Telling him that 'twas Lud'gast whose fate was in his hand.
 And then uprode his warriors, who witnessed had right well
 What, 'twixt the twain before them, upon the watch, befell.

190.

Siegfried now thence would take him; but he was set upon
 By thirty of the foemen: yet did he hold his own,
 And kept his wealthy captive; and struck out, brave and true,
 And gave those stately chieftains much bitter cause to rue.

191.

In self-defence, the thirty he thereupon did slay.
 One only left he living; who spurred his steed away
 To bear the direful tidings of all that there befell:
 Which eke his bloody helmet did but too plainly tell.

192.

When to the men of Denmark the dreadful news was told,—
 How that their king was taken,— they scarce their grief could hold.
 And when they told his brother, he fell to rave like mad,
 In uncontrolled fury,— so great the grief he had.

193.

So Ludegast the warrior was captive made, and then
 Led from the field by Siegfried, and giv'n to Gunther's men.
 To Hagen's care they gave him; and when they heard the truth,
 That 'twas the king he brought them,— they did not grieve, forsooth !

The manner of response we need is swift and true.
 "Come on, my men! There are we more to do,
 Before the day is done. I will restore my life.
 There's war among the heathen. All have a timely wife!

"Give us a hand, my men, and these words I say:
 To battle, then, I call. We shall be straight the way.
 Let us with might and main, in battle, hands I crow!
 And we will win the day, and that's some shall know."

So, now, the battle began. To all the men
 About the banner, the standard, raised the men,
 The high-born noble Unker — he's the best he rode;
 And the the camp-folk, following, proudly to battle strode.

They had no more, all counted, than just a thousand men
 And twelve, with those of Siegfried. The day began rising then
 Upon the streets and roadways, as through the land they rode:
 One saw their lances shining, and many a good shield glowed.

Now also had they come forth in great array.
 Their swords sharpened, as I have heard men say;
 And keenly, deadly, wielded by heroes' hands:
 The strangers, would castle guard and lands.

Of the twelve, the twelve valiant men
 From out the Netherland.
 Stained many a hand.

200.

r Sindold's might, and Hunold's, and Gernot's had laid
 course of that fell combat, full many a hero dead,
 e they had time to reckon the valour of the foe.
 and many a winsome lady that day must weep for woe.

201.

r Volker and Sir Hagen, and also Ortewein,
 immed in that strife the light that from many a helm did shine,
 'ith damp of blood downpouring,— these battle-valiant men!
 ir Dankwart's prowess also wrought many a marvel then.

202.

And also they of Denmark did well their weapons wield,
 And many a thrust resounded on many a polish'd shield;
 And the sharp sword-strokes echoed death-dealing, blow on blow.
 The warlike Saxons likewise did harm enough, I trow!

203.

As now the bold Burgundians, pressed forward in the fight,
 By them was many a sword-wound, wide-cleft,—a ghastly sight!
 And streaming o'er the saddles, one saw the reeking blood.
 Thus fought they for dear honour, those valiant knights and good.

204.

One heard there, loud-resounding, from every hero's hand,
 the ringing of keen weapons; whilst they of Netherland
 followed their bold leader, into the thickest fray.
 Instantly they followed where Siegfried showed the way.

205.

'henish heroes could never come anigh;—
 e seen down-flowing red streamlets bloodily
 .ttring helmets, cloven by Siegfried's hand;—
 ing Lud'ger before his warriors stand.

117.

They were then in a forest — the last firm end to end,
 And the sun was low — his rays and shadow bend.
 The sun was low and the forest — the fierceness of their mood:
 The sun was low and the forest — all many a warrior good.

118.

The sun was low and the forest — the fierce Siegfried stand,
 The sun was low and the forest — the great sword in his hand,—
 The sun was low and the forest — and what a host he slew:
 The sun was low and the forest — and how his anger grew.

119.

The sun was low and the forest — and a green ring of steel
 The sun was low and the forest — in their opponents fell
 The sun was low and the forest — nettle and strength to gauge;—
 The sun was low and the forest — then turned the face and rage.

120.

The leader of the Saxons — was well wren, I know,
 The leader was a captive,— and therefore grieved enow.
 The leader was a captive,— was Siegfried's son;—
 The leader was a captive,— that soon the truth was known.

121.

The leader was a captive,— and eke of such fell force,
 The leader was a captive,— stagger'd his battle-horse.
 The leader was a captive,— and as the turmoil grew,
 The leader was a captive,— Siegfried — was terrible to view.

122.

The leader was a captive,— and eke of such fell force,
 The leader was a captive,— the dead around did lie.
 The leader was a captive,— and Sindold, and Hunold,
 The leader was a captive,— many a warrior cold.

212.

in combat undivided these noble princes were ;
 and o'er their helmets, harmless, flew many a well-aimed spear
 between the glitt'ring targets from each opposing knight.
 and blood-stained were the bucklers that whilom shone so bright.

213.

and, in the stress of battle, full many an eager knight
 dismounted from his charger. Thus, hand to hand, did fight
Siegfried the bold, and Lud'ger, who each did each defy,
 One saw the broken splinters of shafts and lances fly.

214.

Fast flew the shield-clasps, severed by mighty Siegfried's hand.
 He thought himself the victor, this prince of Netherland,
 Over the dauntless Saxons ;— so many wounded lay.
 Ha, how the bright mail-armour at Dankwart's strokes did fray !

215.

Just then the Saxon Lud'ger espied upon a shield
 A kingly crown emblazoned, which Siegfried's arm did wield.
 Then knew he, of a surety, that 'twas the mighty man.
 The chieftain to his comrades loudly to call began :

216.

"Forego your fighting, warriors,— my lieges, all is done !
 For I have seen Siegfried, the royal Siegmund's son ;—
 A mighty hero mine eyes have seen, I trow,—
 An evil devil to work us Saxons woe."

217.

He ensigns at Ludeger's command.
 Which, ere long, was granted to his band ;
 Lud'ger's pris'ner must go to Burgundy :
 And alone 'twas that won this victory.

218.

By general agreement the combat then was stopped,
And many a battered buckler was by the fighters dropped,
And many a helm;—whatever was found upon the land,
Bore on it blood-red traces of some Burgundian hand.

219.

They captured whom they listed : all had they in their power.
And King Gernot and Hagen,— of chivalry the flower,—
Had the sick borne on litters ; they took, besides these, then,
As prisoners to the Rhineland, five hundred goodly men.

220.

Meanwhile the vanquished warriors to Denmark rode away,
Nor could the Saxons boast of much better luck than they,
That any one need praise them : sore vexed these heroes were.
The friends, too, of the fallen bewailed them, in despair.

221.

They had their arms and weapons unto the Rhine conveyed.
How well now all had ended ! With his brave warriors' aid
Siegfried the prince had done it, as he did all things, well :
Which even Gunther's liegemen were bound in truth to tell.

222.

To Worms a message firstly the gallant Gernot sent,
To let his friends and kinsmen know how the matter went,
And what success had crowned them,— him and his lieges all :
For honour had they striven, and gallantly withal.

223.

The young esquires ran quickly, and soon the news was told.
And they for joy exulted,— whom grief before did hold,—
At these all-welcome tidings, which to the city came.
And many were the questions asked by each noble dame :

224.

“How had they fared, the warriors of the most noble king?”
One of the squires they, straightway, before Kriemhilda bring :
But this was done in secret, she took no open part,—
Though there was one among them to whom was pledged her heart.

225.

And when she saw the envoy into her chamber led,
Kriemhild, the beauteous maiden, in voice most kindly said :
“Now tell me the dear tidings and gold I’ll give to thee;—
And tell’st thou with no lying, a friend thou hast in me.

226.

“How fared my brother Gernot amid the fight?” she said,
“And other friends and kinsmen? have we left many dead?
And who did best of any? fain would I hear of thee.”
Then outspake that bold herald: “Of cravens none had we!

227.

“Yet, in the thick of battle rode ne’er a man so well,
Oh, Princess high and mighty,— since I the truth must tell,—
As did the noble stranger, who came from Netherland :
Full many a wondrous deed was wrought by bold Siegfried’s hand.

228.

“For what great feats soever in battle may have done
Sir Dankwart and Sir Hagen and many another one ;
Howe’er they fought for honour, it all was idle wind
Compared with Siegfried’s doings, the son of Siegelind.

229.

“Though in the strife of battle full many a hero fell,
The wonders wrought by Siegfried no man hath words to tell!
Nor all his deeds of daring when he to battle rode :
Through him, for fallen kinsmen, the women’s tears have flowed.

121

He had not yet risen to his feet off that ground.
 His hands were on his knees, his head resound;
 His eyes were on the ground, his hands of crimson blood;
 His hands were on his knees, his head resound.

122

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126

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236.

Yet still the best achievement that on that field hath been,
r any, from the youngest to the oldest man hath seen,
/as done in knightly fashion by Siegfried's own right hand.
ich hostages he bringeth here, into Gunther's land.

237.

These by sheer strength he vanquished, the brave and goodly
wight !

~~and Ludegast of Denmark~~ hath suffered great despite,
~~and Ludeger his brother,~~ who from the Saxons came.
Now hearken to my tidings, most rich and noble dame !

238.

'They twain were taken prisoners, and that by Siegfried's hand.
Never so many captives were brought into this land
As to the Rhine are coming only for Siegfried's part."
No news could have been dearer to Lady Kriemhild's heart.

239.

"Unwounded captives bring they,— five hundred men and more;
And then the deadly-wounded,— of bloody biers fourscore ;—
Full eighty bloodstained stretchers, my Lady, understand !
The better part of these were slain by bold Siegfried's hand.

240.

"They who, thus overweening, have flouted us on Rhine,
Must now, as battle-pris'ners, in Gunther's kingdom pine :
Yea, even now they bring them with joy unto our land."
Then sweetly flushed her fair face, as she did understand.

241.

He face, with pleasure, became all rosy red ;
od luck, deliver'd out of the direst need
er goodly warrior,— the young man, Prince Siegfried ;
friends rejoiced she,— as she was bound, indeed.

242.

Then spake the winsome maiden : "Well hast thou said, and now
Thou shalt have costly raiment for guerdon, that I owe;
And ten good golden marks too; they shall be brought thee here!"
Such tidings to rich ladies a man would gladly bear !

243.

They gave him for his guerdon the raiment and the gold.
Then to the windows hastened the fair maids, to behold
The horsemen up the street come : and, watching eagerly,
They saw the gallant riders come home to Burgundy.

244.

They came, the hale and hearty, the wounded also came.
They heard the neighbours' greetings, and need not blush for shame.
The host rode forth rejoicing to meet his guests again :
It was a joyful ending to all his anxious pain.

245.

He welcomed home his warriors, and all the strangers too ;—
To the great king 'twas fitting not otherwise to do
Than graciously to tender his thanks to those who came,
Who had in fight defended the honour of his name.

246. .

Then Günther asked for tidings, that he to hear was fain,
Of those who had returned not,— their comrades who were slain.
But sixty men were missing, and he had lost no more ;—
For these they might cease mourning, as for the brave of yore.

247.

The men who were unwounded brought many a battered shield,
And many a dinted helmet, to Gunther from that field.
Before the royal palace dismounted all the men,
And, with a shout of gladness, were welcomed home again.

248.

'Twas ordered then to billet the warriors in the town.
The king bade that his guests be well-treated, as his own.
The wounded must be cared for and granted quiet rest;—
E'en for his foes his kindness the king did manifest.

249.

To Ludegast of Denmark he said: "Be welcome here!
Though, through your fault, much damage we have incurred, I
fear;
But that will be repaid me, if I have luck!" quoth he,
"May God reward my brave friends, who fought so well for me."

250.

"And you do well to thank them," King Ludeger outspake,
"For never king before did such high-born prisoners take!
The honourable usage shall well rewarded be,
Which unto us, your foemen, you've granted graciously."

251.

"I'll let ye both," cried Gunther, "here, on the spot, go free,
If all the other pris'ners swear to remain with me.
For these I will have pledges, that they leave not my land
Without my given warrant." Thereon each gave his hand.

252.

All were to rest and comfort within the hostels brought;
They put to bed the wounded, with kindly care and thought;
While to the hale and hearty good wine and mead they gave.
A gayer time and gladder the folk could never have.

253.

The battered shields were taken and put away in store.
Of blood-besprinkled saddles were there enough and more;—
The men were told to hide them, in case the women wept.
Still many a way-worn horseman into the city crept.

"The business was wonderful.
The store was very full.
The goods were very good, too.
The price was very low and the quality was very high.

The all was denied.
 Instantly it was denied.
 If they were not in fight :
 To God his glory was his king's delight.

If any there were minded to journey home again,
They, in most friendly fashion, were bidden to remain.
And then the king took counsel how to reward his men,
Who had his will according done, with honour and with pain.

prior Gernot counselled: — Let these now homeward ride!
 'Tis time we'll bid them, if nothing should betide,
 us to join in a great festivity;
 they be healed who sorely wounded lie."

258.
 asked Siegfried likewise, the lord of Netherland;
 the other his wish did understand,
 his dear friend not to go;—
 his sister, he would have gone, I trow.

259.
 as too wealthy to care for the king's pay,
 He deserved it. He was his friend alway,
 his kinsmen : for had their eyes not seen
 in combat the victory had been?

260.

For love of the fair maiden he thought he still would stay,—
Perchance he yet might see her : which came to pass one day,
Just as he most desired ;— he learnt to know the maid.
Thereafter to his country right joyously he sped.

261.

Each day in knightly contests the host would prove his men :
Which willingly were practised by many a proud young thane.
Then had he seats erected by Worms, upon the strand,
For those whom he awaited in his Burgundian land.

262.

About this time, when well-nigh the coming guests were due,
The beauteous Kriemhilda heard what he had in view :
That he, with friends, was meaning to keep high festival.
Then was a great commotion among the fair dames all

263.

As to the robes and ribands 'twere best for each to wear.
Unto the rich queen Uté the tidings straight they bear
Of the proud stranger-warriors, who now were on their way.
Then from her presses took she rich clothes and raiment gay.

264.

For love of her dear children she had these garments made,
Wherewith were soon adorned full many a dame and maid,
And many a bold young hero of the Burgundian land.
For many strangers, likewise, rich clothes she did command.

276.

Then in their presses sought they for all their garments gay,
And all the goodly raiment that had been stored away ;
The gold lace and the bracelets that there to hand were laid ;
And with all care bedecked her full many a lovely maid.

277.

And many a knight on that day had younger gladly been,
That he might be of women more favourably seen ;
Instead whereof he'd care not a kingdom rich to own !
And gladly did they gaze on these damsels yet unknown !

278.

Then the rich king commanded that with Kriemhild should go
A hundred of his liegemen,— her service pledged unto.
Of his and her own kinsmen, who carried sword in hand.
Such were the court-attendants of the Burgundian land.

279.

The rich Queen-mother Uté with her fair daughter came,
And in her train brought with her full many a comely dame,—
Five score of them or over,— all royally arrayed.
Her daughter, too, was followed by many a winsome maid.

280.

From out the women's quarters one might have seen them go ;
There was a goodly thronging of heroes eke, I trow,
For this of all things eager, if it perchance might be
That they should have the fortune the noble maid to see.

281.

Then came the lovely maiden : even as morning-red
From sombre clouds outbreaking. And many a sorrow fled
From him whose heart did hold her, and eke so long had held :
When thus the winsome fair one before him he beheld.

282.

on her raiment glittered full many a precious stone :
er rosy blushing colour with lovely radiance shone.
ough any would deny it he could not but confess,
at on this earth he never had seen more loveliness.

283.

st as the moon in brightness excels the brightest stars,
nd, suddenly outshining, athwart the clouds appears ;
o seemed she now, comparéd with dames of fairest guise.
hen did our gallant hero feel his bold spirits rise.

. 284.

ne saw before her marching the chamberlains, in state,—
ut the high-mettled warriors their order would not wait :
hey thronged to where, in passing, the fair maid they could see.
he while Sir Siegfried suffered both joy and misery.

285.

ldly he thought within him : “ How can it ever be ?
is mere foolish dreaming that I should marry thee !
et to be still a stranger !— then were I better dead ! ”
nd, thinking so, his colour did change 'twixt white and red.

286.

here stood the son of Siegmund ; as winsome did he look
s if his form were limnéd upon a parchment-book,
y hand of cunning master ; and all men said of him,
hat there was no man like him, so fine and fair of limb.

287.

hey who the maid attended now strove to clear the track,
nd keep the throng from pressing ; and many a knight drew back.
nd many hearts beat quicker for joy, in many a breast,
s passed each high-born lady in splendid raiment drest.

288.

Then spake the king's daughter, the prince of Burgundy :
 "Thou wilt not say that I am a maid done to thee,
 Thou shalt not say that I am a maid done to thee,
 It is not of all my warriors I am a warrior shame."

289.

"If thou wouldst say Sir Siegfried, my sister go,
 That the fair maid may give him much good night come, I trow.
 She, who is the greatest warrior, may by her greeting cheer;
 And thus the good night be counted to us here."

290.

Then some of the host's kinsmen, where where the knight did stand
 And thus spake to the warrior, who came from Netherland :
 "The king his leave hath granted, that you to court should go,
 His sister there shall greet you : they would you honour show."

291.

At this the knight's mood changéd, again from grave to gay ;
 And in his heart Love reignéd, and grief had fled away,—
 For the fair Ute's daughter at last his eyes would see !
 Right soon she greeted Siegfried, with winning modesty.

292.

When the high-couraged warrior she saw before her there,
 Her cheeks were lit with crimson : then spake the maiden fair :
 "Be welcome here, Sir Siegfried, thou good and noble knight."
 And when he heard her greeting, his heart grew wondrous light.

293.

He took him by the hand,
 The fair maiden stand !
 She gave a tender glance,
 He looked askance.

294.

that white hand, I wonder, in lover's fashion press'd?
 sign of tender wooing? in sooth 'twas ne'er confess'd.
 scarce can I believe that such chance had been let go;
 she her kindness to him did very quickly show.

295.

the full bliss of summer, and in the fair Maytide,
 thin his heart could never, again such joy abide
 now did fill his bosom; the while he there did stand,
 and her whom he desiréd was holding hand in hand.

296.

and many a warrior murmured: "Ah, if it only were
 my lot to walk beside her, as I have seen him here,
 at her side to lay me, what bliss would mine have been!"
 never served hero better, methinks, to win a queen.

297.

Whate'er might be the country the strangers call'd their own,
 none had an eye for any save for this pair alone.
 And when they let her kiss him,— the goodly man and brave!—
 in all this world he never a greater joy could have.

298.

Then rose the King of Denmark, and suddenly did cry:
 "To bring about this greeting how many wounded lie!
 Too well have I observed it,— and all by Siegfried's hand;
 Forefend him, God, from coming again to Danish land!"

299.

On one side and the other they bade the folk make way
 For our lady Kriemhild. Then saw one an array
 of knights who churchward did bear her company.
 Her goodly gallant no longer near her be;

300.

Now she went to the masson, with all her dames beside,
 And a knight and queen—was she in all her pride,
 That so many lords of many—whom forgot to rise;
 And she had a token—his seal upon her eyes.

301.

And she had a token—his seal upon her eyes,
 And she had a token—his seal upon her eyes,
 And she had a token—his seal upon her eyes,
 And she had a token—his seal upon her eyes.

302.

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303.

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304.

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305.

And she had a token—his seal upon her eyes,
 And she had a token—his seal upon her eyes,
 And she had a token—his seal upon her eyes,
 And she had a token—his seal upon her eyes.

306.

All kinds of mirth and pleasure, and mighty noise withal,
Were seen and heard forthcoming daily from Gunther's hall,—
Without, and inside also,— from many a gallant man.
Sir Ortwein and Sir Hagen right wondrous feats began.

307.

Whatever games were started these jocund heroes were
Always among the foremost, a skilled and ready pair.
Whereby these warriors soon were well known to every guest ;
Of such kind were the jewels that Gunther's land possessed.

308.

Those who had long lain wounded one saw, at last, appear :
They too would share the pastimes, would fence and throw the
spear

Among the king's retainers ; well-pleased to find at length
That they could do as others ; they had renewed their strength.

309.

The host would have them treated well, at his festal board,
Theirs was to be the best food. Thus managed he to ward
The slightest breath of scandal, which oft a king doth reach.
From guest to guest on went he, with kindly words for each.

310.

He said : " All ye, good warriors, before ye ride away,
I pray ye take my presents : 'twas in my mind alway
To recompense your service ; my goods despise not ye :
I fain would share them with you ; this do I willingly."

311.

Then did the lords of Denmark thus answer, out of hand :
" Before we ride hence, homewards unto our fatherland,
We fain would have a treaty : of peace we knights have need,
We've lost dear friends in plenty who, through your knights, lie
dead."

312.

King Ludegast of Denmark was healed now of his wound,
And eke the Saxon leader was once more whole and sound.
Albeit many dead men they left in alien land.
Then went the royal Gunther to where Siegfried did stand.

313.

And to the warrior spake he : "Advise what I shall do ;
For early on the morrow our foes intend to go,
And crave abiding pledges of peace, from mine and me :
Now counsel me, thane Siegfried, what seemeth good to thee ?

314.

"What ransom they have offered thou shalt be truly told :
So much as mares five hundred can carry of pure gold,
This will they give me gladly, if I will set them free."
Then Siegfried answered stoutly : "That would unworthy be !

315.

"Free, and without a ransom hence shouldst thou let them fare :
And that these noble warriors henceforward may beware
How they come hither, riding as foemen to our land,
Of this in full assurance let both kings give their hand."

316.

"This counsel will I follow !" So saying, forth they went.
A message to the foemen was soon thereafter sent :
"The gold, that ye have offered, doth no man care to keep,
While for the strife-worn warriors at home their dear ones weep."

317.

Then many a shield with treasure piled high they carried there :
Enough, although he weighed not, for every friend to share ;
Five hundred marks well-counted, yea more, he gave to some.
This counsel to King Gunther had from bold Gernot come.

318.

Then took they leave, for all were impatient to be gone ;
 But first, before Kriemhilda the guests filed, one by one ;
 There sat dame Uté also, the Queen, who bade " God speed " !
 Never before were warriors sped half so well, indeed.

319.

The hostels were left empty when they had ridden away.
 Only at home remained the king, in state array
 With all his friends and kinsmen,— full many a noble knight.
 These, day by day, were gladden'd, by dame Kriemhilda's sight.

320.

Now Siegfried, the good hero, did also sue for leave :
 Not hoping more to win her, to whom his heart did cleave.
 The king o'erheard the saying that he would fain away :
 'Twas Giselher who urged him his journey to delay.

321.

" Now whither, noble Siegfried, is it thy will to ride ?
 Stay rather, I beseech thee, and with our warriors bide.
 Remain with our King Gunther, and with his men and me ;—
 Are there not here fair women, whom thou hast leave to see ? "

322.

Then spake the stalwart Siegfried : " So bide the steeds in stall !
 For I have changed my purpose, I will not ride at all.
 And bear the bucklers hence too ;— I hoped to see my land,
 But Giselher's true friendship I know not to withstand. "

323.

Thus did the gallant hero remain for friendship's sake.
 And in no other country could he a sojourn make
 That to his soul were sweeter ;— and so it hap'd th
 On every day thenceforward did fair Kriemhilda

"What's the matter with you?" he asked, as if he was
looking at a clock. "You're not here, and I
don't know where you are. The clock is not
working, and I don't know where it is."

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they carried them
back to share
to give to some
of them come

HOW SIEGFRIED FIRST SAW KRIEMHILDE

59

315.
 men took they leave, for all were impatient to be gone;
 first, before Kriemhilde the guests fled one by one;
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341.

"Let us, as plain knights-errant, go sailing down the Rhine.
And I will name unto thee the knights we'll take of thine.
Besides us two, two others shall go, none else at all:
So shall we win the lady, whatever may befall.

342.

"Lone of these four comrades, another shall be thou;
The third had best be Hagen, we should do well enow.
And let the fourth be Dankwart, he hath a dauntless hand;
A thousand others dare not in fight us four withstand."

343.

I would I had some knowledge," the king said,—“verily,
Ere we from hither journey, 'twould much enhearten me,—
In what apparel should we before Brunhild appear;
What would be right and fitting? that, Siegfried, would I hear.”

344.

“Whatever be most handsome is worn, I understand,
By ev'ry man, at all times, in Queen Brunhilda's land;
Therefore should we go finely before this haughty dame,—
That when men talk about us we need not blush for shame.”

345.

Then cried the good king, “Surely, I will myself go ask
My own dear, gracious mother, that she do set the task
To her fair maids, to make us such garb, wherein array'd
We may appear with honour before the royal maid.”

346.

Then Hagen, knight of Tronjé, in courtly fashion spake:
“Why trouble you your mother with things to undertake?
Let your fair sister hear now all that you have in mind.
Her aid, in this state journey, you will of service find.”



THE DAY OF THE NIBELUNGS.

[AD

335-

the noble warriors twain,
and grief enough, and pain,
thence to the Rhine they brought
must be with sorrow wrought

336-

Tarnhelm yclept, must take:
his bird flight, did make
whose name was Alberich,
sped on their journey quick.

337-

the wondrous Tarnhelm wore
he had not known before:
turned to his own, 'twas said
with the noble maid.

338-

in such a wondrous way
straightway
whilst no man could him see.
whence mickle woe had he.

339-

ere yet our way begin,
across the water win?
across the water win?
across the water win?

353.

And friendly mutual glances, and looks that were not loth,
Caused many a thought to waken within the hearts of both.
He in his heart aye bore her, dear as his very life ;
And soon, by steadfast service, he won her for his wife.

354.

The rich king spake unto her : " O dearest sister mine,
This thing that we have purposed fails without help of thine.
In Queen Brunhilda's country some pleasure we desire ;
And need, in ladies' presence, the goodliest attire."

355.

Then did the maiden answer : " Belovéd brother mine,
Ready am I, at all times, to serve, in need of thine ;—
Of that thou mayst be certain : it is Kriemhilda's part.
Should any one deny thee 'twould vex her to the heart.

356.

" Nor shouldst thou, noble hero, beg of me anxiously,—
Thou shouldst command my service, in lordly style and free.
For whatsoever please thee, for that I'm ready aye,
And gladly will I do it ;" the maiden sweet did say.

357.

" 'Tis our desire, dear sister, in goodly garb to stand,
Which you may help provide us, with your own noble hand :
So set your women working, that all may be well done,—
For we about this journey will be gainsaid by none."

358.

Then spake again the maiden : " Now mark what I shall say !
I have the silk already : see that we get, straightway,
Some gems from off your bucklers : we'll work them on the cloth."
Then Gunther and Sir Siegfried obeyed her, nothing loth.

"Inquired the royal maid,
 "How gorgeously arrayed?"
 "And yet my men will be,
 "That go to court with me.

"And as it what I say!—
 "Enough for four days' stay.
 "I'll be sure of it,
 "That my delight may quit."

"And when she did depart
 "To her room in needle-art,
 "And to her room, in haste;
 "And to the rest!

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 "And to her room, in haste;
 "And to the rest!

365.

As they on this state journey determined to set forth,
As ermine furs they reckoned of insufficient worth.
Over them fur trimmings of coal-black hue they set :
High-days such like garments brave knights right well befitted.

366.

Amidst Arabian gold-work there glittered many a gem.
Careful were the women, naught was too small for them.
Seven weeks the raiment was all prepared aright,
Like the weapons thereto for every gallant knight.

367.

When this was all made ready, upon the banks of Rhine
As diligently fashion'd a little vessel, fine
And strong, which down the river should bear them to the sea.
The noble maids by this time were of their tasks weary.

368.

Was told unto the warriors that all things were to hand
That they were to take with them ;— all their apparel grand,
Such as they had desired ; it all was now complete :
So would they on the Rhine-bank no longer stay their feet.

369.

Wherefore, to fetch their comrades, a messenger was bade,
That they should come and look on this raiment newly made ;—
It might be, for the heroes, too long, or else too small.
But 'twas of the right measure : they thanked the ladies all.

370.

For all who came and saw it were bounden to confess,
In all the world they never had seen more noble dress.
They might be proud such clothing in any court to wear ;—
Of finer knights' apparel, in sooth, knew no one there.

377.

nding, at the windows, was many a lovely child ;
 and fair was blowing— the ship's sail soon was fill'd.
 ant band of heroes on Rhine were floating free ;
 like the royal Gunther : " Who now shall skipper be ? "

378.

will I be ! " cried Siegfried, " for I can down the flood
 ell and safely steer you, doubt not, ye heroes good ;
 per water-channels, I well do understand."
 joyously they parted from the Burgundian land.

379.

gfried took a boathook, and stoutly did it grip,
 leaning on it strongly, from strand he shoved the ship ;
 mighty man, King Gunther, did likewise seize an oar,
 soon these worthy heroes had cleared them from the shore.

380.

carried costly viands, and plenty of good wine,—
 best that had been vintaged upon the banks of Rhine.
 air horses stood right firmly,— they had a well-found stall ;
 air vessel voyaged smoothly ; small ill did them befall.

381.

en they unfurl'd the sailcloths,— the stout sails, strained and
 tight,—
 and twenty miles they sail'd, or ever it was night,
 ith a good wind to help them down stream, toward the sea.
 heir steadfast toil was later those brave ones' woe to be.

382.

Jpon the twelfth day morning, as we have heard men say,
 The wind had borne the vessel far distant, and away
 Toward Isenstein the fortress, in Queen Brunhilda's land :
 To all of them, save Siegfried, it was an unknown strand.

133.

"How many towers did see,
 How many spires all suddenly:
 How many towers did I see known to thee,
 How many spires all suddenly— and this fair land we see?"

134.

"It is to me well known:
 The tower is the tower of Queen Brunnhilda own,
 The tower is the tower— as you have heard me say;—
 The tower is the tower— and we will meet this day."

135.

"It is to me well known— as it is in my mind to be,—
 The tower is the tower— as it is in my mind to be.
 The tower is the tower— as it is in my mind to be.
 The tower is the tower— as it is in my mind to be, I trow."

136.

"When we were in the land— attended by her train,
 The tower is the tower— as it is in my mind to be:
 The tower is the tower— and it is in my mind to be;
 The tower is the tower— shall all be duly done."

137.

"The tower is the tower— whether he asked of them;
 The tower is the tower— none did his word contemn.
 The tower is the tower— as better did they fare,
 The tower is the tower— beheld Brunnhilda fair."

138.

"The tower is the tower— I say," Sir Siegfried said,
 The tower is the tower— ever-beauteous maid!
 The tower is the tower— very life;
 The tower is the tower— to wife!"

ADVENTURE VII.—HOW GUNTHER WON
BRUNHILDA.

389.

Now, while all this was passing, their ship had neared unto
The castle walls, so closely that the king's eyes could view
Above them, at the windows, full many a winsome maid.
That he knew none amongst them made Gunther passing sad.

390.

Then questioned he Sir Siegfried, his brave companion :
"Of all those lovely maidens, dost thou in truth know none,
Who now are gazing downward at us upon the flood?
Whoe'er their lord and master, they be of noble blood."

391.

To him replied Sir Siegfried : "Now look you, secretly,
Amidst the maids there standing, and then confess to me
Which you would take among them, if you thereto had might."
"That will I do!" cried Gunther, the bold and valiant knight.

392.

"Yonder, within that window, I see one of them stand
All in a snow-white garment ; she's fairest of the band !
'Tis her mine eyes have chosen, so fair she is to see :
Had I the power to wed her, my wife she needs must be."

393.

"The judgment of thine eyesight hath done for thee right well !
That is the noble Brunhild, the maiden beautiful,
Whom all thine heart desireth, thy senses, and thy mood."
In all ways did her bearing seem to King Gunther good.

... and

...from himself.

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[illegible]

...had,
right
right

400.

Bejewell'd were their saddles, their saddle-bows were small ;
so rode they in their glory, before Brunhilda's hall.
The bells upon their harness were wrought of bright red gold,
They came unto that country as bound on venture bold.

401.

With spear-heads newly sharpened, with swords well-wrought and
keen,
Which hung down to the rowels of these two goodly men ;
Such weapons bore the bold ones, with broad and sharp-edged
blade.

'Twas all marked by Brunhilda, the great and noble maid.

402.

With them came also Dankwart, and Hagen of Tronjé.
These warriors were apparell'd, as ancient legends say,
Alike, in costly raiment and raven-black of hue ;
Fair were their shields and mighty, and strong and broad thereto.

403.

The jewels that adorned them from India's land were brought,
And glittered on their garments, as these the sunshine caught.
Their little vessel left they unguarded, on the flood ;
So rode they to the castle, these heroes brave and good.

404.

Full six-and-eighty turrets they saw within the wall,
Three palaces far-stretching, and one fair, well-built hall,
Compact of precious marble, as meadow-grass all green ;
And here, amid her court-folk, awaited them the queen.

405.

The castle gate unlock'd was, the doors were open thrown,
Brunhilda's liegemen hasted to meet these guests unknown,
To welcome these newcomers unto their lady's land ;
They bade men take their horses and bucklers from their hands

405.

A messenger said to them + "Field now your swords to us,
 And use your shining weapons!" + "Nay, it shall not be thus!"
 Then Hagen, lord of Titurel + "These we ourselves will bear!"
 Then Siegfried had to learn him what were the customs there.

406.

"The custom in this house as you must understand,
 Is that no guest shall carry a weapon in his hand.
 So let them hence be taken: in sooth, 'tis fairly meant."
 Then Hagen, Gunther's brother, did grudgingly consent.

408.

While for the guests was order'd, and lodgings good prepared.
 And to and from the palace swift-footed warriors fared,—
 All clad in princely raiment they ever came and went;
 And on the stranger-heroes were wond'ring glances bent.

409.

Then unto Queen Brunhilda some one the news declared,
 That certain unknown warriors had suddenly appear'd,
 In glorious apparel, by ship across the flood.
 Whereon began to question the maiden fair and good.

410.

"I would that someone told me," so spake the maiden queen,
 Who are these stranger-warriors, that ne'er afore were seen,
 And how they came to my castle, with such a noble grace?
 And these heroes have voyaged to this place?"

411.

"Lady, I must avow I e'er beheld till now;
 They are much like unto Siegfried:
 Some, that is in sooth my rede.

412.

The other his companion, who is so praiseworthy,
 He the power had, either some rich king he might be,
 Or have the jurisdiction o'er some wide princely lands :
 He sees beside the others how royally he stands.

413.

The third of these companions he is of aspect grim,
 Yet, mighty Queen, right comely he seems, and fair of limb ;
 From those his rapid glances that he around him throws,
 His mien, if I mistake not, a gruesome temper shows.

414.

"The youngest knight among them seems worthy of all praise ;
 As gentle as a maiden, yet knightly are his ways.
 How winsomely he stands there, with what a high-born mien !
 And yet, if he were thwarted, we'd rue the hour, I ween.

415.

"How blithe soe'er his bearing, and beautiful his form,
 There's many a goodly woman— an' he began to storm—
 That he could bring to weeping ; his body fashion'd is
 To excel in manly virtues,— a brave, bold thane is this !"

416.

Then spake the queen : "Now bring me my raiment and my gear ;—
 And if the mighty Siegfried to win my love is here,
 And therefore to this land comes,— 'tis like to cost his life !
 In sooth, I do not fear him enough to be his wife."

417.

Ere long, the fair Brunhilda was fittingly array'd.
 With her there came full many a beauteous serving-maid,—
 A hundred, perhaps, or over,— attired in all their best.
 These comely dames were eager to see the stranger-guest.

411.

When these were went in order, the shores of Isealand,
The warriors of Brunnilda, each with his sword in hand,
Five hundred men in over, whereat their hearts misgave.
Then from their ranks arose they, the heroes bold and brave.

412.

When first the Queen Brunnilda perceived the knight Siegfried,
To would perchance be told of the words the maiden said :
"Be welcome," cried she, "Siegfried, here unto this our land.
What meaning hath your journey, I fain would understand?"

413.

"I proffer, Dame Brunnilda, my hearty thankfulness,
That you have deigned to greet me, most generous princess,
Before this noble warrior, who stands beside me now ;—
Seeing that he my lord is, such grace I disavow !

414.

"By birth he is of Rhineland : and what shall I say more ?
His love for thee his only, that brings us to this shore.
My lord doth seek to wed thee, whatever may befall ;
Of this, in time, bethink thee : he will not change at all.

422.

"The name he bears is Gunther, he is a mighty king.
If haply he may win thee, he asks no other thing.
'Twas this good warrior bade me upon this journey come :
An' I had thought to have said, 'I'd fain have stay'd at home.'"

423.

and thou his vassal art,
dare play his part,
be his wife ;
thou shalt lose thy life."

424.

en Hagen spake, of Tronjé: "O lady, let us see
 is mighty game you play at; before a victory
 u score off my lord Gunther, it will go hard enow!
 r such a beauteous maiden he'll count to win, I trow."

425.

The stone he must throw boldly, then leap to where it lies;
 hen hurl the javelin with me: so be ye not unwise!
 Who knows? each may be losing his honour and his head!
 ou must bethink you therefore," the winsome fair one said.

426.

On this, the gallant Siegfried unto King Gunther went,
 And bade him tell the princess his purpose and intent;
 He might be for the issue without anxiety:
 "I shall be there to shield you with all my craft," quoth he.

427.

Then spake the royal Gunther: "Most high and mighty queen!
 Declare your task unto me; and had it harder been,
 For sake of your fair body I everything would stake:
 My very head I'd venture you for my wife to take."

428.

As soon as Queen Brunhilda his will and meaning knew,
 She bade the games be hastened, as seemed to her but due.
 And ordered them to bring her her wonted gear for fight,
 A ruddy golden breastplate, and buckler round and bright.

429.

A silken fighting-doublet drew over all the maid,
 Such as, in closest combat, would turn the sharpest blade;
 O Arabian stuff 'twas woven, and it was deftly done;
 Embroider'd trimming upon the border shone.

430
 The knights of Neelung were eyed somewhat askance,
 As they saw the king of Neelung. It brooked this arrogance.
 The king of Neelung would not. Did weigh upon their mood
 The king of Neelung. Our journey bodes no good.

431
 The king of Neelung was long. Slept the crafty one,
 The king of Neelung. The king of the vessel gone,
 The king of Neelung. Where hidden it had lain,
 The king of Neelung. Thus he became unseen.

432
 The king of Neelung was long. In where the queen he found
 The king of Neelung. With many knights around.
 The king of Neelung. As hummingly 'twas done
 The king of Neelung. He was discern'd by none.

433
 The king of Neelung was long. Wherein the games should be;
 The king of Neelung. Who came the sport to see.
 The king of Neelung. Who weapons bare:
 The king of Neelung. The heroes must declare.

434
 The king of Neelung was long. In all her warlike gear,
 The king of Neelung. All kingdoms far and near.
 The king of Neelung. Was vested golden twine:
 The king of Neelung. Her lively colour shine.

who in their hands did hold
 wrought of ruddy gold,
 broad, and bright;
 would fight.

436.

maiden's shield-sustainer a noble baldrick was,
 rein were gems embroidered, as green as e'er was grass;
 ir ever-changing brightness was mirror'd in the gold.
 who would win such lady must needs be warrior bold!

437.

r shield beneath the bosses, as we have heard declare,
 s three good spans in thickness; and this the maid could bear.
 th steel and gold inlayings so richly 'twas beset,
 r chamberlains—four of them— could scarcely carry it.

438.

hen now the sturdy Hagen beheld this shield brought in,
 e wrathful Lord of Tronjé did thus to speak begin:
 How now, King Gunther? truly we're like to lose our life,
 e, whom you would be wooing, must be the devil's wife!"

439.

ear more now of her raiment: she had a wondrous store,
 warrior's silken mantle from Azagaug she wore,—
 noble, costly garment; from which the flash was seen,
 f many a splendid jewel pertaining to the queen.

440.

hen bore they to the lady,— and weighty 'twas, I trow,—
 a giant-spear well sharpened, which she was wont to throw;
 lost strong and monstrous was it, and mighty too, and broad,
 and with its keen twin-edges right terribly it gored.

441.

Of that spear's weight, now hearken and hear the wonderment:
 Four and a half good measures of metal to it went.
 Th... liegemen could scarce uphold its weight.
 W... saw it, his courage did abate

"The end?"
 "The end?"
 "The end?"
 "The end?"

"The end?"
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448.
 they received their weapons, at the proud maid's command,
 y did Dankwart redder to hold his sword in hand :
 "play your games, and welcome!" shouted the fearless thane,
 her need fear no danger, we have our swords again !"

449.
 strength of Queen Brunhilda it was a fearsome thing ;
 y brought her for the contest a stone into the ring—
 onstrous one and heavy, so mighty, and so round,
 lve stalwart heroes scarcely could heave it from the ground.

450.
 ene'er she threw the javelin she next would hurl this stone.
 en did the stout Burgundians within their spirit groan :
 od help us !" cried Sir Hagen, "what bride our king hath
 woo'd!
 ll were her proper sojourn, she's of the Devil's brood !"

451.
 ound her snow-white arms she began her sleeves to wind,
 nd on her hand she fastened the buckler to her mind ;
 en high she poised her javelin ; and so began the fight.
 unther, and Siegfried likewise, did dread Brunhilda's spite.

452.
 nd were it not for Siegfried, who came unto his aid,
 he king's life had been forfeit unto the doughty maid.
 he knight, unseen, approach'd him, and twitch'd him by the
 hand ;
 but Gunther quail'd ; his cunning he did not understand.

453.
 "What was it that did touch me?" the bold man thought, and he
 Look'd round and sought on all sides, but not a soul could see.
 A voice said : "It is Siegfried, 'tis I, your trusty friend,
 As to this queen, I pray you, let fear be at an end."

THE END OF THE REVELINGS

"I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?
I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?"

"I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?
I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?"

"I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?
I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?"

"I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?
I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?"

"I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?
I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?"

477

"I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?
I am not a woman," said the king, "is she
not the one who has been found dead?"

472.

"Can it e'er have happened," thereon inquired the queen,
 "t'you, most noble Siegfried, naught of the game have seen,
 "sin I have been worsted by mighty Gunther's hand?"
 answered her Sir Hagen of the Burgundian land.

473.

"Spake: "Yourself, O lady, did much disturb our mood;
 "so the ship departed Siegfried, the hero good,
 "at time our lord of Rhineland did win the game from you:
 "before he knows naught of it," said Gunther's liegeman true.

474.

"How welcome are these tidings," quoth warrior Siegfried,
 "that thus your pride hath fallen doth please me well, indeed,
 "at some one there is living who may your master be!
 "Now must you, noble maiden, go with us o'er the sea."

475.

"Then spake the noble fair one: "This may not yet befall:
 "kinsmen first must hear it, and my good liegemen all;
 "may not thus so lightly desert my land, I trow;
 "my chief friends must be sent there, ere I myself shall go."

476.

"Then sent she heralds riding here, there and everywhere,
 "to bid her friends and kinsmen, and lieges all repair
 "to Isenstein the fortress, nor would she take excuse;
 "and bade that costly raiment be given for their use.

477.

"So daily came they riding, from early hours till late
 "into Brunhilda's castle, like to an army great.
 "Now, by my faith!" cried Hagen, "see now what we have done!
 "With fair Brunhilda's liegemen we'll have some trouble soon.

G

The first of these was the
 fact that the weather was
 very bad. The second was
 that the food was very
 poor. The third was that
 the people were very
 poor. The fourth was that
 the people were very
 poor. The fifth was that
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 the people were very
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483.

ugh no one saw the steersman, fast sped the bark along,
ed by the strength of Siegfried,— in sooth his arms were strong.
I thought that she was driven by some strange, mighty wind :
it was Siegfried drave her, the son of fair Sieglind.

484.

en he a day had voyaged, and likewise through a night,
came unto a country, by dint of main and might ;—
m one end to the other a hundred leagues or more,
e Niblung land, where kept he the mighty hoard in store.

485.

en, all alone, the hero steered to an eyot broad,
d ran his skiff alongshore and left her safely moor'd.
en climbed he to a mountain, on which a castle stood,
d, like a wayworn traveller, for shelter sought and food.

486.

came he to the gateway, which, locked, before him stood,—
hey guarded well their honour, as folk at this day would.
hen straight he fell a-knocking, like any man unknown.
he gate was kept well guarded : he saw within it soon

487.

A monstrous giant warder, who sentinel did stand,
and kept at all times ready his weapons close at hand.
He called : " Who cometh knocking so loudly at the door ?"
Then answer'd the bold Siegfried— but changed his voice therefore—

488.

And said : " I am a warrior ; undo me now the gate,
Ere I arouse to anger some one, though it be late,
Who rather would sleep softly and in his chamber bide."
It anger'd the gate-keeper that Siegfried thus replied.

488.

Now was the giant's gate-guard as strong as
 Of his belt the clasp, and quickly seized the
 And swung aloft his buckler, and opened wide the gate;
 How strangely then on Siegfried he rushed with scorn of life!

490.

"How had he dared awaken so many a gallant man?"
 And straight upon the question his hand to smite began.
 The noble guest prepared him a bold defence to make—
 But, at the porter's onset, his very shield-clasps brake,

491.

Smashed by a bar of iron; the knight was sore distrest,
 And somewhat was he fearful that death would end his quest—
 Seeing the huge gate-keeper did smite so sturdily;
 Which yet his master Siegfried was not ill-pleased to see.

492.

So mighty was their combat that all the castle rang.
 Throughout the halls of Niblung men heard the crash and clang.
 At last he threw the giant, and bound him foot and hand;
 The tidings soon spread over the whole of Niblung-land.

493.

The noise of men's strife sounded deep through the mountain side.
 Where the wild one— a wild dwarf—did abide:
 His weapons, and ran to where he found
 The stranger, as he the giant bound.

494.

Which, of strength he had good store;
 On his body wore;
 He carried in his hand:
 To where Siegfried did stand.

495.

a knots, both hard and heavy, hung down in front of it,
 a which the bold man's buckler so ruthlessly he hit,—
 a his hand he held it,— that it in pieces fell.
 a was the goodly stranger in fear for life as well.

496.

a shield, that now was broken, he from his hand did throw,
 a thrust into its scabbard his sword,—'twas long enow.—
 a treasurer he would not, an' he could help it, slay :
 a did restrain his anger, as righteous is alway.

497.

with his strong hands for weapons at Alberich he ran,
 and by the beard he gripp'd him, that old and grizzly man !
 ruthlessly he pull'd it, that loud the old man cried :
 the young hero's chastising could Albrich ill abide.

498.

loud was the bold dwarf's outcry : " I prithee now, have done ;
 n' I could be the liegeman of any knight, save one
 o whom I have sworn fealty to be his vassal aye,—
 rather than die, I'd serve thee !" the crafty one did say.

499.

but Alberich was bound as the giant had been bound,
 and by the strength of Siegfried much pain and trouble found.
 The dwarf began to question : " How are you call'd ?" quoth he,
 He said : " My name is Siegfried : I should be known to thee !"

500.

" Th is a goodly hearing !" said Alberich the dwarf.
 " No know I of a surety what metal you are of,
 and you have good reason to lord it in the land.
 I will leave me, I'll do what you command."

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507.

On a morning early the bold knights rode away.
 The gallant comrades Siegfried had got himself that day :
 For all had good war-horses, and garments rich and grand :
 In knightly mien and bearing they came to Brunhild's land.

508.

On the turrets standing was many a winsome maid.
 In spake the queen : " Doth any know who be these," she said,
 Whom I see sailing hither from o'er the sea so far?
 Their sails be richly woven,— whiter than snow they are."

509.

The Rhine-king made answer : " My warriors are they,
 Whom I did on the journey bid near at hand to stay.
 Went to fetch them, lady, and here they come, I see."
 Whereon the noble strangers were eyed all wond'ringly.

510.

Plainly saw they Siegfried upon the foredeck stand,
 Dressed in costly raiment, with all his warrior-band.
 Then said the queen : " Now must you, my Lord King, counsel me :
 Shall these new guests be welcomed? or shall I let them be?"

511.

In spake : " Without the palace to meet them you should go,
 If we saw them gladly, that they may take it so."
 Then did the queen according unto the king's behest ;—
 Though, in her greeting, Siegfried she sever'd from the rest.

512.

Nothing was found for them, their goods were put in store.
 So many strangers had landed on that shore,
 The throng of folk was, whichever way one went.
 On sailing homewards to Burgundy were bent.

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the Chamberlain, if the
the speaker, if the speaker
the speaker, if the speaker

Such rich goods from the States
I've sent for Deane to take care
'Whate'er my dinner last year
In such a splendid feast

519.

Hagen spake of Tronjé: "Fair lady, have no fear!
 of the Rhine river hath gold enough, and gear
 h just as freely; and well may we forego
 Brunhilda's treasure when hence we homeward go."

520.

for mine own sake, hear me," the queen said, "for I will
 h me twenty coffers, which I with gold will fill
 en stuffs, which also I'll give with mine own hand,
 come over yonder unto King Gunther's land."

521.

ious stones and jewels they did her coffers lade;
 lords of the chamber to help therewith she bade:
 ould put no trust in the men of Giselher,
 therefore, and Hagen began to laugh at her.

522.

te the Queen Brunhilda: "To whom I leave my land?
 must be determined by thine and mine own hand."
 king made answer: "Let him forthwith appear
 hereto would please you,— we'll leave him steward here."

523.

r noblest kinsmen the lady to her bade,
 r mother's brother) to him the maiden said:
 be now entrusted my castles and the land,
 come directly under King Gunther's hand."

524.

er people choose twenty hundred men,
 he Rhineland must make the voyage then,—
 ousand warriors who came from Niblung land.
 o start made ready: they rode down to the strand.

530.

Gunther made him answer: "Lo, what you say is right,
 for this errand, surely there is no better knight
 than you yourself, friend Hagen; so ride now to my land:
 for journey no one better can make them understand."

531.

Hagen made answer Hagen: "Small use should I be there!—
 let me look to the cabin, whilst on the flood we fare:
 I stay beside the women, and to their gear attend,
 until we bring them safely into Burgundian land."

532.

Bid Siegfried rather do it, and him your envoy make;—
 his mighty strength will aid him, the task to overtake.
 Should he decline the going, you must, with kindness,
 for love of your fair sister, the journey on him press."

533.

He sent to fetch Siegfried, who came at his command.
 Quoth Gunther, "You are nearing your home in mine own land,
 I ought to have sent you home long ago, my dear,
 And should have sent you home long ago, my dear."

"Thee, Siegfried, I pray, your grant, I pray,
 ever the good did say.
 And did you not say so bold a man!
 And him began."

"For my sake," Gunther said,
 the beautiful young maid;—
 the noble maid and I."
 he could no more deny.

526.

"Wander thou wilt command me: I cannot say thee nay;
 For love of that fair maiden I'll do what thou dost say.
 How could I aught deny her, who owns my heart alone?
 For her sake that thou askest is all as good as done."

527.

"Go thou and tell my mother, Tell the noble queen,
 That we went the journey in joyous mood have been;
 And let the King, my brothers, know each how we did fare,
 And let our friends most dear the happy tidings hear."

528.

"And thou my dearest sister, I pray thee naught reserve
 For my dear hand and household will her right gladly serve.
 Despatch into the court-hall and all my serving-men,
 That they may hear that ye have done: still well did I attain!"

529.

"And thou my gallant brother, that nephew dear of mine,
 Whom we have raised by Worms upon the Rhine,
 And thou my sister's son, they also should be told
 How Queen Kriemhild's high festival will hold."

530.

"And thou my dear daughter, as she hath learn'd
 How we will come to Worms, I shall be home return'd)
 And thou my dear daughter, a welcome good must give:—
 For my dear daughter's sake let all beholden live."

531.

"And thou my dear daughter, as she hath learn'd
 How we will come to Worms, I shall be home return'd)
 And thou my dear daughter, a welcome good must give:—
 For my dear daughter's sake let all beholden live."

542.

With four and twenty horsemen he into Worms did ride.
"Without the king he cometh!" was heard on every side;
And all the folk lamented, and stirr'd were with the dread
Lest in that foreign country they'd left their master dead!

543.

They from their steeds dismounted: right happy was their mood;
And Giseler hasten'd to them, the youthful king and good,
And eke his brother Gernot: how eagerly spake he,
When he the kingly Gunther did not with Siegfried see!

544.

"Be welcome, Siegfried," cried he, "but, pray you let me know
Where you have left my brother, who forth with you did go?
If Queen Brunhilda's prowess have robbed us of our king,
Methinks your high-aim'd wooing hath been an evil thing!"

545.

"Forego your fears!" quoth Siegfried, "my noble comrade sends
His loyal love and greeting to you and all his friends.
In rare good health I left him: I came at his command
To bring you, as his envoy, tidings to this your land.

546.

"You must see to it quickly, however it may be,
That I the good queen-mother and your fair sister see;—
For they must hear the message, which I was bade to tell,
From Gunther and Brunhilda: with both of whom 'tis well."

547.

Then Giseler the lad said: "Go then to her you've won,
Since for my sister's favour, such service you have done!
Great trouble doth she suffer about my brother's fate.
The maid will see you gladly, I'll warrant me of that!"

548.

The noble Siegfried answer'd: "An' I can serve the maid,
Right faithfully and gladly that service shall be paid.
Now who will tell these ladies that them I fain would see?
'Twas Giselher the comely his messenger would be.

549.

Swift Giselher the tidings unto his mother told,
And eke unto his sister, when he did them behold:
"To us the hero Siegfried of Netherland hath come;
Him hath my brother Gunther here to the Rhine sent home.

550.

"He bringeth us full tidings of how the king doth fare.
Now must ye give permission that he to court repair;
From Iceland brings he hither a true report, I trow."—
Yet soon these noble ladies much sorrow were to know.

551.

They hastened for their state robes, and did themselves array,
And then they summon'd Siegfried to come to court straightway—
Which did her swelling-hearted, too happy her to see:
The good queen Kriemhilda spake to him graciously.

552.

"Siegfried, thou worthy knight!" she cried, "thou art my brother's flower,
The noble king, abide?—wouldst thou that we were forlorn!
For I was born!"

"I will not leave the herald's fee /
Nor shall I ever have ye.
I am sure;—
I have been on before,

554.

"They send to you their duty,— he and that bride of his,—
With all true love and kindness, most noble queen ; it is
High time to leave off weeping,— for they will soon be here !"
For many a day she had not heard tidings half so dear.

555.

Then with her snow-white kerchief she wiped her lovely eyes
That were all wet with weeping ; and in her gracious wise
Began to thank the bearer for the good news he brought.
And so her grief and sorrow were turn'd to pleasant thought.

556.

She bade him to be seated, whereof right glad was he.
Then spake the lovesome maiden : " Rejoicéd should I be,
Could I for herald's guerdon give all my gold away !
Too rich for such meed are you,— I'll be your debtor aye."

557.

Said he : " If for my portion I thirty kingdoms had,
I would, by your hands given, of any gift be glad !"
" Well ! " said the gracious lady, " it shall be given to you."
Her chamberlain was bidden to fetch the herald's due.

558.

Full four-and-twenty buckles, set with bright stones and good,
She gave him for his guerdon. And yet the hero's mood
Allowed him not to keep them ;— he handed them around
Unto her nearest ladies that in the room he found.

559.

Her mother gave him greeting, in kind and courtly way.
" I have yet more to tell you," the valiant man did say,
" Of what the king requireth when to the Rhine comes he ;—
If, lady, you will grant it, he'll aye beholden be.

560.

"The noble guests he bringeth— I heard him this desire—
He wishes you to welcome; and eke he doth require
That you ride forth to meet him, outside Worms, on the strand
This doth the king, at your hands, in all good faith demand."

561.

Then spake the lovely lady: "Ready am I alway
Howe'er I can to serve him; I cannot say him nay;
All shall in loyal kindness, as he desires, be done."
Whereat her cheek, for gladness, a heighten'd colour won.

562.

No prince's herald ever a better welcome had;
And had she dared to kiss him she would have been right glad
How winsomely the gallant then from the dames withdrew!
As noble Siegfried counsel'd did the Burgundians do.

563.

Sir Sindold and Sir Hunold, and eke Rumold the thane,
To whom the charge was given, must work with might and main
To have the seats made ready, by Worms upon the sands,
One saw the royal stewards there working with their hands!

564.

Outwardly could not ought be left undone.
All sides, every one;
Which was about to be.
for the festivity.

Pd was ev'ry wall
her's royal hall
y a foreign man.
terribly began.

566.
 n all along the highways throughout the countryside
 e seen the three kings' kinsmen, who bidden were to ride
 wait the guests' arrival, who soon were to appear.
 le from the stores was taken abundance of rich gear.

567.
 long was spread the rumour that certain folk had seen
 nhilda's friends approaching; at which there did begin
 at stir among the people in the Burgundian land.
 me! what gallant warriors were seen on either hand!

568.
 en spake the fair Kriemhilda: "Ye maids attending me,
 ho would at this reception fain bear me company,
 , see ~~ak~~ from out my presses the richest robes and best:
 at th ~~ereby~~ praise and honour we gain from every guest."

569.
 ie warriors came shortly,— who ordered to be brought
 he saddle ~~s~~ nobly-fashioned, with finest gold inwrought,
 n which s ~~ould~~ ride the ladies, at Worms upon the Rhine.
 ne never saw horse-trappings more fitting or more fine:

570.
 la! what a golden gleaming from these gay palfreys shone,
 n ~~oridles~~ sparkled with many a precious stone!
 ke were golden, on carpets bright and good
 lies' mounting: right joyous was their mood.

571.
 saddled, and in the court did stay
 ounour,— as I erewhile did say.
 en one saw these palfreys bear:
 of which you e'er could hear.

578.

These lovely ladies in full attire were seen,
 who should escort them appear'd upon the scene.
 Aged warriors were they, of mighty strength and craft;
 beside his buckler, did bear an ashen shaft.

PICTURE X.—HOW BRUNHILDA WAS RECEIVED
 AT WORMS.

579.

On the further Rhine-bank, came with a numerous band
 King and his guests with him, and drew nigh to the strand.
 Now, too, by the rein led, full many a maiden's steed.
 Those who should receive them to wait they had no need.

580.

When the folk of Iceland unto the ship were led,—
 Like the Niblung people who Siegfried follow'd,—
 Put across the water, with quick, unwearied hand,
 Here, upon the quay-side, they saw the king's friends stand.

581.

Hearken to my story! I'll tell you how the Queen
 The rich queen-mother, was with her maidens seen,
 When coming from the castle, whence she herself did ride.
 When many an acquaintance 'twixt knight and maid was tied.

582.

Her palfrey led was by Gere the Margrave
 The fort gateway, where Siegfried, warrior brave,
 Forth wait upon her;— she was a lovely maid!
 Her fair lady was, later, well repaid.

589.

dames each other greeted with clasp of hand and arm,
 one had ever heard of a welcoming so warm.
 soon as the two ladies the bride for certain wist,
 ne Uté and her daughter her sweet mouth often kiss'd.

590.

en all Brunhilda's ladies had lighted on the strand,
 y tenderly were greeted, and taken by the hand :—
 many a well-dight woman there was a warrior good ;
 a many beauteous maidens with Dame Brunhilda stood.

591.

ore their greeting ended a good long hour had sped ;
 and the lips, like roses, were kiss'd of many a maid.
 stood by one another those two kings' daughters bright,—
 many a valiant hero they were a lovely sight.

592.

heir own eyes beheld they, who often told had been
 such peerless beauty had ever yet been seen
 of these two ladies: it now was plain to view ;—
 aw, too, on their bodies naught in the least untrue.

593.

se who could judge of women and on fair forms decide,
 laud and praise for beauty the royal Gunther's bride.
 others—they were wise men with more discerning eyes—
 that from Dame Brunhilda Kriemhilda won the prize.

594.

and maid were walking, each other opposite,
 a lovely body one saw right nobly dight.
 a rich pavilion and silken tent were there :
 hat Worms surrounded was crowded everywhere.

THE LAY OF THE NIBELUNGS

285

The Nibelungs were strong, and brave, and true,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood.

A.

C.

D.

T.

The Nibelungs were strong, and brave, and true,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood.

T.

H.

O.

A.

The Nibelungs were strong, and brave, and true,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood.

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The Nibelungs were strong, and brave, and true,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood,
 They were the best of men, and of the best of blood.

601.

When it grew towards even and near the sun's last ray—
 The air was cooler— they would no more delay.
 Many a knight and lady toward the castle rode.
 Many a beauteous woman were loving looks bestow'd.

602.

Now they raced for raiment such as good knights do wear,
 Of highly-mettled warriors,— as was the custom there,—
 They reach'd the palace; there did the king dismount,
 They the ladies aided as gallant knights be wont.

603.

Too, the royal ladies did from each other part.
 Ute and her daughter together did depart,
 And their court-attendants, unto a chamber wide.
 Shouts of joy and laughter were heard on ev'ry side.

604.

Being set in order, the royal Gunther would
 His guests to supper 'twas seen how by him stood
 Iful Brunhilda, and now a crown she wore,
 In her king's kingdom;— was she therefore.

605.

re ... and good—
 ... and.
 ... seen!

625.

He thought how sweet would rest be, by that fair woman's side !
His heart was never free from this longing for his bride.
He from her wifely duties much love must surely win :
Then tenderly Brunhilda to eye did he begin.

626.

The guests of knightly pastimes were bid to make an end ;
The king unto his chamber would with his spouse ascend.
Before the great hall-stairway Kriemhild and Brunhild met :
They look'd upon each other with nought but kindness yet.

627.

Then came their court-attendants ; there was no lingering ;
The chamberlains rich-suited the taper-lights did bring.
The warriors were divided,— to either king his men :
'Twas plainly seen how many did follow Siegfried then.

628.

Unto their wedding chambers thus both the heroes came.
And each of them was thinking how he by love would tame
His lovely lady's scruples, and tender was his mood.
To Siegfried was his pastime beyond all measure good.

629.

For when the lordly hero held Kriemhild to his heart,
And comforted the maiden with every loving art,
Amid his noble wooing she seem'd his very life :
Not for a thousand others had he foregone his wife.

630.

Of how he woo'd his lady I nothing more will tell.
But hearken to this story, to Gunther what befell
Along with Dame Brunhilda. Methinks the comely thane,
On many a softer pillow with other dames had lain !

632.
 The evening-dusk had vanished, women as well as men :
 The door of the loom-chamber was quickly closed then :
 He thought he should be sleeping her sweet form present
 The door was still in doubt when she his wife would be.

633.
 In midst of these white-thorn she came into the bed.
 Then thought the noble warrior : " Now have I compassed
 All that I ever meant to do, though all my lifelong days !"
 The lovely had bewitched him, — 'twere no unlikely case.

634.
 The following day he took speech with his hand the light,
 To whom he then was going, then ventured that bold knight
 He would himself beside her, his joy could not be told
 As he came to her, the lovely one did fold.

635.
 All day long was he, right ready as day,
 That she would say, but he did love his will,
 As he would of her, that was his state :
 Though he was with her, and found unfriendly hate.

636.
 He said, " I have not yet seen you best had let me be,
 For you will get from me, you see of that—
 I hate you, and you hate me."

637.
 And, strong, tore her dress,
 And showed her princess ;
 And she wore,
 And she wore.

637.

feet and hands together she fasten'd therewithal ;
 n to a nail she bore him, and hung him on the wall !
 ause her sleep he hinder'd, to him she love forbad :
 t strength, in sooth, was such that his death he well-nigh had.

638.

en fell he to beseeching, who master should have been :
 oose now my bonds, I pray you, most good and noble queen !
 take an oath, fair lady, you never to constrain ;
 d never will I lay me so nigh to you again."

639.

he little reck'd how fared he, so she but softly lay :
 e needs must stay there hanging all night until the day,—
 until the light of morning athwart the lattice shone.
 e'er of strength he boasted, that strength was well-nigh gone.

640.

Now say to me Lord Gunther, would you not be afraid
 o be found tied and hanging," question'd the beauteous maid,
 'By your own body-servants?— bound by a woman, too?"
 The noble knight made answer: "'Twould evil bode for you !

641.

"I, too, should win small honour," the worthy man did say:
 "I pray you of your goodness to let me by you stay,
 And since it seems we doth anger you so much,
 'Twill long be mine if I shall dare your robe to touch !"

642.

and let him to his feet.
 to his wife did get ;
 at he her raiment fair
 e— of that she took good care.

643.

He came then their attendants, and brought them
 Of which a mighty store was all ready for that day
 Like yon water the world was, right gloomy had he
 The country's noble ruler, who wore, by day, a crown

644.

According to all custom, which rightly men obey,
 King Gunther and Queen Brünhild no longer must
 They were the minister, where Holy Mass was sung
 That, then, came St. Sigfried, and mighty was

645.

in his own chamber, in readiness did wait
 Whence they had sent all their crowns and robes of
 They were they concerned, and after that was done
 At the western gate, in each, each with a crown

646.

The crown was brought—six hundred, maybe
 Of that ye may be sure;—through Burgundian land
 In every new knight's hand

647.

And, as the crown was brought, the king
 All ready a golden shield
 The king's crown was brought—

648.

And, as the crown was brought, the king
 All ready a golden shield
 The king's crown was brought—

649.

to his guest the host spake: "A foul disgrace 'twill be!
brought the very devil home to the house with me!
when I sought to woo her, she bound me tight withal,
to a nail she bore me and hang'd me on the wall.

650.

ere hung I in mine anguish all night until the day,
ere she would unbind me. How softly, too, she lay!
s, trusting in your friendship, I tell you secretly."
n cried the stalwart Siegfried: "This grieves me, verily;

651.

ll see if I can help you, so put your grief away.
manage that this evening she'll let you by her stay;—
e shall not even flout you, nor scorn your love again."
his saying was to Gunther sweet comfort after pain.

652.

nd further spake Sir Siegfried: "Thou yet mayst prosper well.
ight different, I ween, was the luck that us befell!
o me your sister Kriemhild is dearer than my life:
his same night Dame Brunhilda shall be your willing wite."

653.

He said: "Unto your chamber I'll come this very night,
Clad in my hood of darkness, of any wight,—
That for another person ye may know;
chamber— their hostel go.

4.

lights th suddenly put out;
d this w you may have no doubt
But I am I will tame your wife
That thereon I stake my life!"

655.

"Then," quoth the king, "be careful thou yieldest not to love.
She is mine own dear lady! The rest I do approve,—
Do with her what thou choosest;— if thou shouldst take her
Mistake I would o'erlook it: she is a fearsome wife!"

656.

"I do agree," cried Siegfried, "and, by my faith, I swear
I will not seek to woo her. Is not thy sister dear
Belov'd of other women I have set eyes on aye?"
Right well believ'd Gunther what Siegfried then did say.

657.

The merry games brought gladness and also weariness.
The singing and the shouting were bidden soon to cease:
Fare ye well ye ladies were shortly to depart.
The charladies commanded the folk to stand apart.

658.

The women and the people were driven from the court.
None of the ladies but a bishop did escort,
They were to sit at meat, must go to sit at meat.
None of the men but they them follow'd to their seat.

659.

The king and the queen and the ladies of honour sat:
The king was full of that, the queen was full of that:
The ladies were full of that, the ladies were full of that:
The king was full of that, the queen was full of that:
The ladies were full of that, the ladies were full of that:
The king was full of that, the queen was full of that:
The ladies were full of that, the ladies were full of that:

660.

The ladies show:

661.

Sir Siegfried by Kriemhilda his beauteous wife still sate,
And with her held sweet converse with joy unmarr'd by hate.
His hands she softly fondled with hers that were so white,—
Until—but how she knew not— he vanish'd from her sight.

662.

As she with him was toying and found he'd slipped away,
She turned to his attendants, and thus the queen did say :
"I marvel what hath happen'd the king, where hath he gone ?
His hands he but this moment hath taken from mine own."

663.

She did not question further. Meanwhile he quickly came
To where the chamber-servants did wait with links aflame :
He straight began to quench them, each in the page's hand.
That it was done by Siegfried Gunther did understand.

664.

Well knew he what he wanted : he therefore bade begone
The maids and dames who waited. As soon as this was done
The noble king was careful himself to lock the door :
Two strong bolts drew he quickly and fastened therebefore.

665.

Behind the tester-hangings he hid the tapers' light.
And then began a play-piece, which ended not that night,
Betwixt the stalwart Siegfried and that fair maiden wife ;—
Which was unto King Gunther with joy and sorrow rife.

666.

When on the couch lay Siegfried alongside of the queen :
"Take care," quoth she, "Lord Gunther, —though sweet it might
have been
To love me—lest you suffer as you have done before."
The lady for bold Siegfried had bitter woe in store.

673.

“woe is me!” the knight thought, “am I to lose my life,
that through a mere maiden? if so be, every wife,
this day forth for ever, with arrogance and pride
treat her lawful husband; which else should ne’er betide.”

674.

king could hear all plainly, and grievéd for the man.
fried, full sore ashaméd, to rage within began;
monstrous strength outputting he with the maid did close,
strove with all his forces Dame Brunhild to oppose.

675.

ag time it seemed to Gunther ere he the maid did quell.
grasp’d his hands so tightly, that from each finger-nail
the blood burst from her pressure;— sad pain the hero bore
yet the noble maiden he made for evermore

676.

enounce that will unruly, of which she was so proud.
he king heard what was passing, but durst not speak a word.
against the bed he press’d her, until she cried again:
his strength it was sufficient to cause her gruesome pain.

677.

then clutch’d she at the girdle she wore about her waist,
and would have bound him with it: he stopp’d it with such haste
and force, that all her body and joints crack’d in the strife.
ended was the battle,— she now was Gunther’s wife.

678.

soyran, now let my life go free,
for that I have done to thee.
to the love of thy true heart:
that thou women’s master art.”

679.

Sir Siegfried stepp'd aside then— whilst there the maiden lay—
As though he had bethought him his clothes to put away ;
But first, from off her finger a golden ring he drew,
So that the noble maiden naught of it ever knew.

680.

He likewise took her girdle,— a silken cord and good,—
I know not if he took it in arrogance of mood.
Unto his wife he gave it, whence woe he one day had.
Then lay each by the other the king and his fair maid.

681.

He woo'd her as a lover, as was his right to do.
And needs must she her anger and eke her shame forego.
So closely did he court her her cheeks grew somewhat pale :
Ah me ! how all her power was made by love to fail !

682.

For now she was no stronger than any other dame,
And all her lovely body his very own became.
If she had tried to spurn him, what profit could it prove ?
This was the work of Gunther by virtue of his love.

683.

How full of fond endearments he by the lady lay,
In tender love and kindness until the dawn of day !
Meanwhile, the noble Siegfried had gone again outside,
And was right warmly welcomed by his own winsome bride.

684.

He put aside the questions which did perplex her thought,
And long from her kept hidden what he for her had brought ;—
Until, a queen and crownéd, to his own land she went.
What he was doom'd to give her he nowise could prevent !

685.

The host upon the morrow was in a gayer mood
Than on the former morning ; thereby a humour good
Spread through his lands, rejoicing full many a noble thane
Whom to his house he summon'd, and well did entertain.

686.

The merry-making lasted until the fourteenth day.
And all the while the turmoil did not abate nor stay
With all kinds of rejoicing, which one and all must share.
'Twas all at the king's charges, and great in sooth they were.

687.

For noble Gunther's kinsmen, as them the king had told,
Gave gifts to do him honour, of raiment and red gold,
Of horses and of silver, unto the outland men.
They who for gifts were eager departed happy then.

688.

And even the lord Siegfried from out of Netherland,
With all his thousand lieges, of that apparel grand
Which they had brought to Rhineland to them did freely give ;
Fine horses, eke, and saddles : right nobly could they live !

689.

Ere all the costly presents were shared among the throng,
Those who would fain go homeward began to think it long.
Ne'er yet of like enjoyment had guests so had their fill.
And so the wedding ended, such was King Gunther's will.

ADVENTURE XI.—HOW SIEGFRIED WENT HOME
WITH HIS WIFE.

690.

Now that the guests departing all on their way were sped,
Siegfried the son of Siegmund unto his people said :
“ We likewise must make ready home to our land to go.”
Well liked his wife these tidings, when she the news did know.

691.

She spake unto her husband : “ When must we needs set out ?
That I should go thus quickly I very much misdoubt ;
For firstly must my brothers with me the kingdom share.”
’Twas irksome unto Siegfried from Kriemhild this to hear.

692.

The princes went unto him and spake to him, all three :
“ Now be assured, Sir Siegfried, that yours shall ever be
Our true and faithful service, ay, even unto death ! ”
He bowed unto the princes who pledged him thus their faith.

693.

“ We would with you share also,” said Giselher the young,
“ The lands and eke the castles which unto us belong.
Whate’er of this wide kingdom be subject to our rule,
Together with Kriemhilda, that shall you share in full.”

694.

Thereon the son of Siegmund said to the princes three,
As soon as of these nobles the goodwill he did see :
“ Your heritage, God grant it for ever blessed be,
And eke the folk within it ! But, for my dear wife, she

695.

"Gladly foregoes the portion that ye to her would give.
A crown she'll soon be wearing, and, if we both should live,
She'll be, in sooth, far richer than any living bride.
In aught else at your service I'll loyally abide."

696.

Then spake the lady Kriemhild : "Though naught my land you
deem,
Burgundian thanes should never stand in such small esteem !
To lead them to his country right glad a king might be.
Ay ! let my own dear brothers e'en share in all with me."

697.

Then spake the noble Gernot : "Take whom thou hast a mind ;
Of those who would ride with thee, thou here wilt plenty find !
Of thirty hundred warriors a thousand we'll give thee
To be thine own attendants." Then Kriemhild speedily

698.

For Hagen sent, of Tronjé, and likewise for Ortwein :
"Will ye and eke your kinsmen," she asked, "be men of mine?"
But Hagen, when he heard it, cried in a mood of wrath :
"Nay, Gunther may not give us to anyone on earth !

699.

"Let others of your household attend you on your way,
Well might you know by this time the customs of Tronjé
Upon the king attending at court we choose to stay,—
Whom we thus far have follow'd, we still would serve away."

700.

'Twas therefore so decided : to start they did prepare.
As noble court-attendants Dame Kriemhild took with her
Of maidens two-and-thirty, besides five hundred men.
Sir Eckewart, the Margrave, went with Kriemhilda then.

701.

Then was a great leave-taking, of squire as well as knight,
Of maiden and of matron : as was indeed but right.
Friend kissing friend at parting was seen on every hand :
Right gaily they departed from out King Gunther's land.

702.

Their kinsmen did escort them far out upon the way.
And camping-grounds were fix'd on, where they the night
should stay,—
Wherever seem'd good to them throughout the kings' domain.
Swift messengers to Siegmund the tidings bear again

703.

That he and Dame Sieglinda, might straight be made aware
How that their son was coming, with Uté's daughter fair,—
The beauteous Kriemhilda, of Worms on the Rhine-strand.
No dearer news and better could e'er have come to hand.

704.

"Ah, well for me," quoth Siegmund, "that I this day have known
When beauteous Kriemhilda comes hither for a crown !
Mine heritage I reckon thereby a worthier thing :
My son, the noble Siegfried, shall here himself be king."

705.

Then gave the Lady Sieglind much velvet of red hue,
And weighty gold and silver, that was their herald's due ;
So much the news rejoiced her which she had heard that day.
With zeal her waiting-maidens now donn'd their best array.

706.

Folks talk'd of who was coming with Siegfried to their land.
They bade men raise a platform, with benches close at hand,
Wherefrom his friends might see him as with his crown he rode.
King Siegmund's men went forward to meet him on the road.

707.

If any better welcome to heroes aye befell
Than in this land of Siegmund, it is not mine to tell.
To meet the fair Kriemhilda Sieglind herself did ride,
With many a lovely lady and gallant knights beside.

708.

After a whole day's journey at length the guests they spied.
Both native-born and strangers did weary of the ride,
Before they reached a fortress,— a castle large and strong,—
'Twas Santen hight; and therein they wore their crowns erelong.

709.

With smiling lips and loving, Sieglind and Siegmund too
Greeted the fair Kriemhilda, with kisses not a few;
They did the like to Siegfried; now gone was all their pain.
Their followers did likewise a hearty welcome gain.

710.

They bade the guests be taken in front of Siegmund's hall.
And there the beauteous maidens were holpen, one and all,
To dismount from their palfreys; and there was many a man
Who on these lovely women to wait with zeal began.

711.

How grand soe'er the wedding had been upon the Rhine,
Here did they give the heroes apparel far more fine
Than they, in all their lifetime, had ever worn before.
One might tell mickle marvels of all their wealth in store.

712.

They sate in state and splendour, and had of all enough.
What raiment wore their servants of golden-colour'd stuff!
With broider'd lace adorned, and precious stones inwrought!
The noble Queen Sieglinda of this had taken thought.

713.

Before his friends and kinsmen then noble Siegmund spake :
"I charge all Siegfried's kinsfolk notice hereby to take,
That he, before these warriors, my crown henceforth shall wear."
This news the Netherlanders were glad in sooth to hear.

714.

To him he gave his kingdom, his crown, and government.
Henceforth he was their master. And his arbitrament
And rendering of justice became abiding law ;—
So that fair Kriemhild's husband was greatly held in awe.

715.

In this estate of honour, he lived, as all declare,
And wore the crown and govern'd,— until, in the tenth year,
His comely wife in safety brought forth her first-born son ;
Whereat the royal kinsfolk were gladden'd ev'ryone.

716.

They hasten'd to baptize him, and gave him for a name,
After his uncle, Gunther, which could not bring him shame.
Were he but as his forbears, a brave man he would grow.
They gave him careful training, as bounden so to do.

717.

About the self-same season Dame Sieglind pass'd away.
Then noble Uté's daughter did over all hold sway,—
As doth beseem such ladies who wealth and lands possess.
That Death the queen had taken they mournéd none the less.

718.

Now yonder too, in Rhineland,— so doth the story run,—
Unto the wealthy Gunther there had been born a son
Of beauteous Brunhilda, in realm of Burgundy ;
And, for the love of Siegfried, that hero's name had he.

719.

With what great care unceasing that child was watch'd and
taught !

For him the noble Gunther caused teachers to be sought,
To rear him in all virtues befitting man's estate.
Alas ! how in his kinsfolk he found an evil fate !

720.

In legends old, the story hath many a time been told,
Of how those gallant warriors lived in the days of old ;
Worthy of praise, at all times, in good King Siegmund's land.
The like did also Gunther and all his knightly band.

721.

The kingdom of the Niblungs was under Siegfried's sway—
Among his wealthy kinsfolk there was no wealthier aye—
And Schilbung's warriors also, and all their goods and gold.
Well might the gallant warrior his head more highly hold.

722.

The greatest of all treasures that ever hero won,
Save they that erst-time held it, the gallant knight did own ;—
Which once upon a mountain he wrested by his might ;
He did to death to gain it full many a doughty knight.

723.

He had his fill of honour ; and had it not been so,
In justice to the hero one needs must own, I trow,
That he among the best was that e'er on horseback sat ;
Men fear'd his strength of body ; with reason did they that.

ADVENTURE XI.—HOW SIEGFRIED WENT HOME WITH HIS WIFE.

590.

When the guests departing all on their way were sped,
 Hounded the son of Siegmund unto his people said :
 " Ye likewise must needs ready home to our land to go."
 Then told his wife these things when she the news did know.

591.

He spake into her husband : " When must we needs set out?
 " That I would to our kingly I very much misdoubt ;
 " I fear these my brothers with me the kingdom share."
 " Was Kriemhild and Siegfried from Kriemhild this to hear.

592.

Then spake unto him and spake to him, all three :
 " That ye shall ever be that yours shall ever be
 " I will with you to my day, even unto death !"
 " Thus spake those three who pledged him thus their faith.

593.

Then said the young, " said Giseler the young,
 " And use the castles which unto us belong.
 " And be subject to our rule,
 " That shall you share in full."

594.

Then said to the princes three,
 " The goodwill he did see :
 " Good grant it for ever blessed be,
 " But, for my dear wife, she

729.

She spake : " My lord belovéd, I pray thee, for my sake,
Lend me thine aid ; that Siegfried may with thy sister take
Their journey to this country,— that here we them may see ;—
For nothing that could happen would be more sweet to me.

730.

" Thy sister's gentle breeding and well-contented mood,
Whene'er I think upon them, in sooth, it doth me good.
How we did sit together, when first I was thy wife !
Right well hath she deserved bold Siegfried's love and life."

731.

So long she thus besought him, until the king did say :
" Be sure that guests more welcome could ne'er be any day ;
'Tis easy to persuade me ! and messengers of mine
I'll send unto the couple, to bring them to the Rhine."

732.

Then spake the queen yet further : " Now also you must say
When you will send to fetch them, and at what time we may
Look for our well-loved kinsfolk to come unto our land :
And whom you purpose sending I fain would understand."

733.

" That will I do," the king said : " thirty of mine own men
Will I send riding thither." These did he summon then,
And by them sent his message unto Prince Siegfried's land.
Dame Brunhild to content them gave much apparel grand.

734.

Then said the king : " This message ye'll take, my warriors bold,
Wherewith I now entrust ye —see that ye naught withhold—
Unto the mighty Siegfried and to my sister dear :
That in this world doth no one more kindness to them bear.

735.

“And pray that both do shortly come to us on the Rhine,
For which we'll ever thank them, I and this lady mine.
Before this next midsummer he and his men shall see
Things done, which to his pleasure and honour great shall be.

736.

“And likewise to King Siegmund my service take and say,
That I and all my people be bound to him alway.
Say also to my sister, that she must tarry not;
More worthy entertainment shall never be her lot.”

737.

Brunhilda and Queen Uté, and every dame at hand,
Sent messages of service to all in Siegfried's land;
Unto the lovely women, and many a man of worth.—
Then by the king's good pleasure the messengers set forth.

738.

In trav'ling guise they journey'd; their steeds and wearing-gear
Were ready made beforehand; so from the land they fare.
They made good progress onward to where their goal did lie,
The king came with an escort to speed his embassy.

739.

At end of three weeks' riding they came into the land
Wherein the Niblung stronghold, where they were sent, did stand
On the Norwegian border; and there they found the thane.
Both steeds and men were weary with their long journey's pain.

740.

Then was it unto Siegfried and to Kriemhilda said
How knights had come on horseback and so apparelléd
As in Burgundian country the fashion was that day:
Straight from the couch up-sprang she whereon she resting lay.

707.

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 n in this land of Siegmund, it is not mine to tell.
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 And wore the crown and govern'd,— until, in the tenth year,
 His comely wife in safety brought forth her first-born son;
 Wherewith the royal kinsfolk were gladden'd ev'ryone.

716.

They hasten'd to baptize him, and gave him for a name,
 After his uncle, Gunther, which could not bring him shame.
 But as his forbears, a brave man he would grow.
 He him careful training, as bounden so to do.

At the self-same time Sieglind pass'd away.
 And over all hold sway,—
 Who wealth and lands possess.
 Then they mourned none the less.

So doth the story run,—
 Had been born a son
 Him of Burgundy;
 That hero's name had he.

753.

"Brunhilda, too, my mistress, and all her maidens fair
Rejoice at this my errand ; if likelihood there were
That they once more might see you, happy would be their
mood."

Unto the fair Kriemhilda this message seemed right good.

754.

As Gere was her kinsman, the host then bade him sit.
Wine for the guests he ordered ; nor long they wanted it.
And thither, too, came Siegmund, who had the heralds seen ;
To the Burgundian heroes he spake with friendly mien :

755.

"Be welcome, Gunther's liegemen, ye warriors, every one !
Since it hath happ'd that Siegfried my son to wife hath won
Kriemhilda fair, more often ye would we gladly see
In this our land, if truly to us ye'll friendly be."

756.

They said that if he wish'd it they'd gladly come again.
And so in pleasure vanish'd their weariness and pain.
The messengers were seated, and food was brought them there :
For guests so welcome Siegfried had plenty of good fare.

757.

For nine days' space and longer to stay they were constrain'd.
Until, at last, the horsemen, who would be gone, complain'd
That back into their country they never more would ride.
Meanwhile his friends King Siegfried had summon'd to his side,

758.

To ask them what they counsell'd : would they go to the Rhine ?
"He hath sent here to fetch me, Gunther, that friend of mine,—
He and his kinsfolk bid us to keep festivity :
I'd gladly go there, save that his land too far doth lie.

759.

"They also bid Kriemhilda to go along with me.
Now counsel me, dear kinsmen, how thither come shall she?
If I through thirty kingdoms my men, for them, must lead,
Then Siegfried's hand to serve them should ready be indeed."

760.

Then spake his chiefs unto him: "If you've a mind unto
The journey to this hightide, we'll counsel what to do:
You with a thousand warriors unto the Rhine shall ride;
So may you with all honour in Burgundy abide."

761.

Then spake the noble Siegmund, of Netherland the lord:
"Go ye unto this feasting, and tell me not a word?
If it will not ashame you I'll ride along with you;
I'll take a hundred swordsmen to swell your retinue."

762.

"Wilt thou in sooth ride with us, my own good father dear?"
Exclaimed the gallant Siegfried: "right gladly that I hear.
Before twelve days are over my fatherland I'll leave."
To all who did desire them they steeds and raiment gave.

763.

Now that the noble ruler was minded soon to start,
The heralds swift were bidden straight homewards to depart,
And unto his wife's kinsmen upon the Rhine to say,
That he would very gladly with them keep holyday.

764.

Both Siegfried and Kriemhilda, as doth the story say,
More gifts gave to the heralds than could be borne away
On their own horses homewards: a wealthy man was he!
Their sturdy beasts of burden they drove right merrily.

753.

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 at this my errand ; if likelihood there were
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 Go there, save that his land too far doth lie.

K

I.

A.
A.
T.

...king's wife spake:
...doth she yet take
...to foster knew?"
...she comes to you."

...command,
...understand
...Kriemhild fire
...and soon be there

...withhold
...and the gold
...were spread
...repaid

...gifts to give
...live
...his hand
...land

...people all
...all evening
...arming
...built

...name
...name
...name
...name

777.

the kitchenmaster, knew well to rule aright
 erlings and scullions ! Ay me ! it was a sight
 he polish'd kettles and pots and pans at hand !
 must be made ready when guests were in the land.

ENTURE XIII.—HOW THEY JOURNEYED TO
 THE FESTIVAL.

778.

their stir and bustle awhile we'll let them be,
 ll how Dame Kriemhilda and her fair company
 on their journey Rhinewards, from Niblung-land did go.
 = rses of fine raiment e'er bore so grand a show.

779.

many sumpter-coffers were ready for the way,
 with his friends Sir Siegfried no longer did delay
 he forth, with Queen Kriemhild, much joy they lookéd for :
 - ll of them soon after it turn'd to sore annoy.

780.

left at home behind them Sir Siegfried's baby son,
 firstborn of Kriemhilda,— not otherwise could be done.
 out of their state-journey arose much woe and pain :
 = father and his mother that babe saw ne'er again.

781.

ice also did Lord Siegmund together with them ride.
 he but known what evil thereafter would betide
 places his same courtly banquet, he ne'er had gone at all :
 refore him by loss of kindred worse ill could ne'er befall.

THE LAY OF THE NIBELUNGS.

781.

Heralds were sent before them the news betimes to say,
and soon rode out to meet them in lordliest array,
many of Diet's kinsfolk and Gunther's gallant men.
The host began to stir him his guests to welcome then.

782.

He went unto Brunhilda where seated was the dame:
"How did my sister greet you," quoth he, "when first you came?
Even in the self-same fashion you Siegfried's wife must greet."
And she: "That will I gladly; I love her, as is meet."

783.

Then spake the great king: "Early to-morrow are they due.
If you would him receive them, be quick in what you do;
For we have first to greet them in this our citadel.
In all my days I have not had guests I loved so well."

784.

The queen and her women she therefore straightway bade
They should seek the richest, the best that could be had,—
And as for her own attendants might wear her guests before.
They did them with much pleasure, of that you may be sure!

785.

Now haster'd to tender service due,
The person had all that was true.
He rode with him in lordly array'd;
And guests were made.

met!

ing get

gundy,

dingly.

788.

This time was arrivèd Sir Siegfried with his men.
 saw the heroes riding forwards and back again
 all parts of the meadows, a vast and shapeless host ;
 ne there could get away from the thronging and the dust.

789.

ow when the country's ruler did gallant Siegfried see,
 together with King Siegmund, how courteously spake he :
 Ye are to me right welcome, and unto every friend !
 throw your royal visit in joy to us will end."

790.

"God prosper you!" quoth Siegmund, that honour-loving man.
 "Since my son Siegfried's friendship for you and yours began.
 Twas aye my hope and purpose one day your face to see."
 King Gunther said : "I also am glad that it should be."

791.

Then was Siegfried receivèd, as well did him beseem,
 With ev'ry fitting honour : which none amiss did deem.
 And Giselher and Gernot did lend all courteous aid.
 Methinks to no guests ever were kindlier honours paid.

And now the two kings' spon each of
 Empty was many a saddle a he
 by the hands of h mounte
 those who lov no he was !

Then lov
 And content
 Thely befell.
 n damosel.

794-

The throng of noble people each other's hand
 While men unto each other their courtly bow
 The ladies fair were kissing each other loving
 With Siegfried's men and Gunther's right joy

795-

No longer did they linger, but rode towards the
 The host meanwhile had bidden that every guest
 How may he was welcome to royal Burgundy
 That way a watch was set for maidens fair

796-

and Ortwein and Ortwein
 That were men of power did all they could
 That were men of power that do not no man
 That were men of power much service offer

797-

before the castle before the castle
 That were men of power and long there
 That were men of power within doors
 That were men of power many a man

798-

in the room in the room
 That were men of power to the time
 That were men of power was the
 That were men of power with the gold

823.

Thereon the king's wife answer'd : " I will not let it be !
 Why should I yield my claim to so many a good knight's fee,
 Who, like the thane, thy husband, doth suit and service owe ?"
 At this the beauteous Kriemhild began with wrath to glow.

824.

"The thought thou must abandon, that he to thee did e'er
 Owe any kind of service ; he is far worthier
 Than is my brother Gunther,— right noble though he be.
 Withdraw me now this saying that I have heard from thee !

825.

"I cannot choose but wonder, since he thy vassal is,
 And thou o'er our two persons hast mastery like this,
 That he his dues unto you hath set so long aside !
 With right do I demur to thine overweening pride."

826.

"Thou ratest thyself too highly !" the king's wife answer'd then,
 "Now will I gladly prove me whether thou hast of men
 As much respect and honour as they accord to me !"
 By this time both the ladies were wrathful as could be.

827.

Then cried the Lady Kriemhild : "This must at once be seen !
 If that my lord's thy vassal, as thou hast sworn, O queen,
 To-day must I the liegemen of both the kings let know
Whether before the king's wife to church I dare to go.

828.

"This very day I'll show thee that I am fealty-free,
And that my man's more worthy than ever thine will be !
 And I myself, moreover, will not be slighted so :
 Thou shalt to-day be witness how I, thy vassal, go

829.

— before the warriors of royal Burgundy.
 — myself more worthy than e'er was known to be
 — whatever who here hath worn the crown!"
 — enough and envy betwixt the dames was sown.

830.

— Brunhild, "that thou our vassal art?
 — women keep from my train apart,
 — unto the minster go."
 — "In truth, it shall be so!"

831.

— "commanded Siegfried's wife
 — while here we live our life:
 — all folk see
 — said to me."

— sought their riches
 — did appear
 — Gunther's dame
 — came.

— had brought
 —
 —
 —

—
 —
 —
 —



835.

her wife stood waiting before the minster door ;
 such pleasant pastime had many a warrior
 waiting-women, whom she with her did bring ;
 the noble Kriemhild with her brave following.

836.

as the daughters of noble knights might wear,
 with what her maids wore was common as the air ;
 she was so wealthy, that thirty queens had shown
 display of raiment as this fair queen alone.

837.

one been wishful he never could have said
 richer clothing had e'er been worn of maid
 that day adorned her noble company :
 to vex Brunhilda, Kriemhild had let it be.

838.

so queens came together before the minster wide,
 ereupon the hostess, by hatred moved and pride,
 evil voice and gesture Kriemhilda bade to stay :
~~ate the queen a vassal~~ shall ne'er take right of way !"

839.

spake the fair Kriemhilda : (and wrathful was her mood)
 elder it ~~have~~ been silent, for thee it had been good !
 thy beauty and stain'd thy purity :
the less wanton a king's wife ever be ?"

840.

calling 'Wanton' ?" in answer cried the queen.
 quoth Kriemhild ; "thy body fair hath been
husband, but by my lord, Siegfried :
 who won thy maidenhead !

It was a trick of his
Who our thy liegeman is?
"Without ail reason scold."
"Now, Brunhild, shall be to Gunther told."

His pride hath thee betray'd:
Thou hast essay'd
To be so:
Thou art over.

He was there in the hall;
He was there in the hall;
He was there in the hall;
He was there in the hall;

844.

By service and by song,
The time seem'd all the long;
In body and in mood,
Bold warriors and good.

845.

Stay'd by the minster door;
Let me hear something more
The scolding, sharp-tongued wife:
'Twill stand him in his life."

846.

With many gallant men
"Now stand you still again,—
You prove to me:
I have sung me bitterly."

847.

Thereto said dame Kriemhilda: "Twere best to let me fare!
By this gold ring I'll prove it, which on my hand I wear;
 'Twas brought to me by Siegfried when by your side he lay."
Ne'er yet had Queen Brunhilda ~~outlived a sadder day.~~

848.

She spake: "This golden jewel was from me stol'n away,
 And hath from me most wrongly been hidden many a day.
 I now at last discover who stole my ring from me!"
 By this time were both ladies in direst enmity.

849.

Yet spake Kriemhilda further: "I will not pass for thief!
 Thou mightst have kept thy counsel, to thee were honour lief.
 'This girdle be my witness, that round my waist I wear,
 That I am not a liar. Ay! Siegfried was thy dear."

850.

The girdle she was wearing was silk from Nineveh,
 With precious stones for fastening, right good it was to see.
 When dame Brunhild beheld it to weeping she did fall:
 It must be told to Gunther and to his lieges all.

851.

Then spake the queen in answer: "Go hence, and bring to me
 The sovran-prince of Rhineland, and from my lips shall he
 Hear how his sister flouts me, and slandereth my life,
By openly declaring I have been Siegfried's wife!"

852.

The king came with his warriors; and when the weeping eyes
 He saw of his belov'd one, he spake, in kindly wise:
 "Now tell me, dearest lady, who hath done aught to thee?"
 Unto the king she answered: "Aye joyless must I be!

853.

"Kriemhilda of mine honour would like to cozen me ;
And, seeing she's thy sister, I make complaint to thee.
She swears I've played the wanton with her own man, Siegfried."
Then answer'd the King Gunther : "She doth an evil deed !"

854.

"She weareth here my girdle, which I so long have lost,
My ring of red gold likewise. To me 'tis bittermost
That e'er my mother bore me. An' thou wilt not disprove,
O king, this grievous scandal, no longer thee I'll love."

855.

Then up and spake King Gunther : "Siegfried shall now appear ;
If he hath play'd the braggart, he shall the truth declare,
Or else deny the slander,— this knight of Netherland !"
Then did Kriemhilda's husband right soon before them stand.

856.

As soon as he had look'd on these dames discomfited,
(Naught knowing of the matter) the noble Siegfried said :
"Why are these ladies weeping? that am I fain to hear,
And wherefore I am bidden before the King to appear?"

857.

Then spake to him King Gunther : "Right sorrowful am I ;
To me my wife Brunhilda hath told a history
That thou thyself hast boasted her first love to have won :
Thy wife, Kriemhild, declareth that thou,thane, this hast done."

858.

Then spake the noble Siegfried : "And if she so hath said,
Before I rest I'll see that for this she be repaid !
In face of all your lieges I'm ready to aver
By oath of mine most solemn, I never told it her !"

859.

Then spake the King of Rhineland: "Give proof of that must thou !
The oath which thou dost offer, if thou canst take it now,
From ev'ry untrue dealing I'll hold thee clear and free."
Then in a ring around him stood they of Burgundy.

860.

His hand the gallant Siegfried outstretched the oath to take.
Then spake the mighty sovran: "So certain do I make
Of thy great innocence, that I will thee acquit:
Sure what my sister charges thou never didst commit."

861.

Yet once again spake Siegfried: "And if she joy doth find
In that she hath so troubled Brunhilda's peace of mind,
My sorrow, of a surety, too deep were to be told."
Then look'd at one another these ready knights and bold.

862.

"So should one train one's women," the hero Siegfried said,
"That suchlike haughty speeches should aye be left unsaid:
Unto thy wife forbid them, to mine I'll do the same;
Such ill-advised behaviour doth fill my heart with shame."

863.

By this dispute were many fair women kept apart.
Brunhilda still the matter so sorely took to heart
That needs must Gunther's warriors feel pity for the dame.
Then Hagen, knight of Tronjé, unto his lady came.

864.

He bade her say what ail'd her, finding her weeping sore.
Then told she him the story, and unto her he swore
That either Kriemhild's husband must for the lie repent
Or he himself thereafter would never live content.

... would I be so sure as
... I have written to the
... with the rest of the
... "All that is left to be

... would I be so sure as
... I have written to the
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... "All that is left to be

... would I be so sure as
... I have written to the
... with the rest of the
... "All that is left to be

859.

spake the King of Rhineland: "Give proof of that must thou !
oath which thou dost offer, if thou canst take it now,
ev'ry untrue dealing I'll hold thee clear and free."
in a ring around him stood they of Burgundy.

860.

and the gallant Siegfried outstretched the oath to take.
spake the mighty sovran: "So certain do I make
y great innocency, that I will thee acquit:
what my sister charges thou never didst commit."

861.

once again spake Siegfried: "And if she joy doth find
that she hath so troubled Brunhilda's peace of mind,
sorrow, of a surety, too deep were to be told."
n look'd at one another these ready knights and bold.

862.

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that suchlike haughty speeches should aye be left unsaid:
to thy wife forbid them, to mine I'll do the same;
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864.

that ail'd her, finding her weeping sore.
the story, and unto her he swore
ild's husband must for the lie repent
after would never live content.

871.

est; then to jousting did they take.
 lance-shaft for Siegfried's wife they brake
 aster, up to the royal hall!
 of Gunther's but ill-content withal.

872.

Lay aside now this murd'rous hate and scorn;
 honour he verily was born.
 ght is also, this marvellous-bold knight,
 inkling, none durst withstand his might."

873.

"Now," quoth Hagen, "save thou should let it out!
 in secret can bring it so about
 nilda's weeping sore reckoning he shall pay.
 Hagen his enemy for aye."

874.

the royal Gunther: "And how may that be done?"
 said in answer: "That will I now make known.
 o unknown envoys to ride as from afar
 ad, 'fore all men to challenge us to war.

875.

the guests, wilt declare that thou must go
 Siegemen; and when he that doth know
 service: so shall he lose his life.
 secret from the bold warrior's wife."

876.

her in evil hour gave ear.
 er, ere any grew aware,
 of chivalry the boast.
was many a hero lost.

888.

With their esquires and liegemen they plann'd the journey then:
'Twas done for the deceiving of Siegfried and his men.
He bade them all be ready, his men of Netherland :
And soon had Siegfried's warriors their fighting gear at hand.

889.

Then spake the gallant Siegfried : " My father Siegmund, pray
Remain thou here behind us ; we shall not long delay ;
If so be that God speed us, we'll come back to the Rhine.
So with the king abiding shall happy days be thine ! "

890.

The banner they unfurléd, as though they fain would start.
Of Gunther's liegemen present there were a goodly part
Who naught knew of the message, nor what it all did mean :
A mighty throng of people round Siegfried there was seen.

891.

Their helmets and their breastplates on horses they did stow :
And many a stout knight hastened to leave the land and go.
Then went Hagen of Tronjé to where Kriemhild did stand,
And prayed for leave of absence, since they would quit the land.

892.

" Thrice happy I," cried Kriemhild, " that I have got for lord
One who to my dear kinsmen such succour can accord,
As doth my dear lord Siegfried unto my kindred here.
Therefore," the queen said, " will I be now of right good cheer.

893.

" But you, my good friend Hagen, one thing remember still ;
That I would gladly serve you, nor e'er have done you ill ;
For this you can requite me to my dear lord one day :
If I've done aught to Brunhild for that he must not pay !

882.

ng with his advisers were whispering without cease;
ould Hagen of Tronjé e'er let him be at peace.
many a lord would gladly have given up the plot,
gen from his counsel would never swerve a jot.

883.

it chanced that Siegfried came on this scheming band;—
ight began to ask them the Lord of Netherland:
es the king so sadly, thus brooding with his men?
' done him mischief, I'll help avenge it then."

884.

and spake King Gunther: "Cause have I sad to be!
gast and Lud'ger have straightly challenged me:
of all shall see them here riding in my land."
l the gallant hero: "Right soon shall Siegfried's hand,

885.

eseem your honour, this business undertake
ese warriors' power, and while I brake:
gholds shall be ruin'd, and be ravagéd,
them have ended: I'll take my head!

all you quietly,
ide to with me.
y I know:
, I trow."

in answer said,—
have his aid.
false and faithless knave!
care you need to have!"

888.

they plann'd the journey then;
of Siegfried and his men.
his men of Netherland:
warriors their fighting gear at hand.

889.

Siegfried: "My father Siegmund, pray
behind us; we shall not long delay;
speed us, we'll come back to the Rhine.
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890.

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of the message nor what it all did mean:
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891.

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hastened to leave the land and go.
where Kriemhild did stand,
since they would quit the land.

892.

Kriemhild, "that I have got for lord
accour can accord,
my kindred here.
of right good cheer.

ing remember still;
e done you ill;
d one day:
ust not pay!

894.

"For since then I have rued it," the noble lady said;
 "He therefore hath my body most sorely punished.
 If I did ever utter aught to enrage her mood,
 Right well hath he avenged her, the hero bold and good."

895.

"You yet shall be forgiven, in days to come," quoth he;
 "Kriemhilda, my dear lady, now must you tell to me
 How through your husband Siegfried to serve you I may try;
 I'll gladly do it, lady; to none more willingly."

896.

"I should have no misgivings," replied the noble wife,
 "Lest any one in haste should jeopardize his life;
 If he were not so rash and over-rash of mood
 He aye might be my safety, my gallant thane and good."

897.

Thereon said she, "Lady, if I have any fear
 Lest any should wound him, best to let me hear
 The art thou must practise, betide;
 For I will guard him, walk or ride."

"Thou art as I, in sooth, am thine;
 To thee I'll be this darling love of mine,
 Mayst thou be true to me,— this husband of my own."
 And she knew not where well he had not known.

899.

"My husband and strong enough thereto.
 When erstwhile the dragon slew,
 Bathed him, the goodly warrior,
 In battle, no steel can cut him more."

912.

"To all guests in my palace due notice shall there be
That I will ride forth early : those who would hunt with me
Must hold themselves all ready ; those who would rather stay
To loiter with the ladies have my good leave away."

913.

Then spake the stalwart Siegfried, with noble courtliness :
"If you will ride a-hunting, I'll gladly do no less.
A huntsman you must lend me, and sundry hounds also,
Then gladly to the forest along with you I'll go."

914.

"And dost thou want one only?" the king said thereupon,
"I'll lend thee, if it please thee, four men to whom are known
The forest and the coverts the quarry most frequent ;
So that the tryst in seeking thy time be not misspent."

915.

Home to his wife then rode he, the goodly warrior bold,
And quickly faithless Hagen unto the king had told
How he could get the vantage of the brave thane : 'twere shame
Such treason foul should ever disgrace a noble name.

ADVENTURE XVI.—HOW SIEGFRIED WAS SLAIN.

916.

King Gunther now and Hagen, those knights exceeding bold,
Had treacherously plotted a woodland hunt to hold.
With lances sharp pursuing the boar in forest free,
The wild bull and the bear too : what bolder sport could be ?

917.

in honourable mind.
 them, and that in divers kind.
 foredoom'd to lose his life.
 of Brunhild, Gunther's wife.

918.

where he Kriemhilda found,
 hunting-gear was bound,
 to cross the Rhine they meant,
 such reason to lament.

919.

on the mouth did kiss :
 my wife, safe, after this ;
 With good friends, till I come
 not bide at home."

had to Hagen told :—
 longer could withhold
 he had e'er been born !
 Slegfried's fair wife mourn.

your hunting be !
 I did see
 flowers grew red as blood.
 no good.

may be some plot :
 for service rendered not,
 hate and enmity ?
 and honesty."

[115]

"Nay, ere, ere, ere a second time again I shall be here,
 I'll know I of thee: paper: thou shalt ill-will doth bear;
 I'll know all times: I'll know all thy with and kin:
 I'll know all times: I'll know all thy with and kin."

[116]

"Nay, ere, ere, ere a second time again I shall be here,
 I'll know I of thee: paper: thou shalt ill-will doth bear;
 I'll know all times: I'll know all thy with and kin:
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[117]

"Nay, ere, ere, ere a second time again I shall be here,
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 I'll know all times: I'll know all thy with and kin:
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[118]

"Nay, ere, ere, ere a second time again I shall be here,
 I'll know I of thee: paper: thou shalt ill-will doth bear;
 I'll know all times: I'll know all thy with and kin:
 I'll know all times: I'll know all thy with and kin."

[119]

"Nay, ere, ere, ere a second time again I shall be here,
 I'll know I of thee: paper: thou shalt ill-will doth bear;
 I'll know all times: I'll know all thy with and kin:
 I'll know all times: I'll know all thy with and kin."

[120]

"Nay, ere, ere, ere a second time again I shall be here,
 I'll know I of thee: paper: thou shalt ill-will doth bear;
 I'll know all times: I'll know all thy with and kin:
 I'll know all times: I'll know all thy with and kin."

929.

The hunters then appointed the watchers where to take
Their places at the openings. Then he, the bold man, spake,
Siegfried the ever-stalwart, "Who leads us through the wood,
To show us where the game is, ye valiant thanes and good?"

930.

"Suppose we part," quoth Hagen, "or ever we begin
To beat about the forest to see what is therein.
That I and these my masters may reason have to know
Who are the better sportsmen that on this chase do go.

931.

"The beaters and the hounds too, we'll evenly divide :
Thus each his choice may follow where'er he please to ride.
Then he who is best sportsman shall have our thanks therefore."
So spake he, and the hunters together stay'd no more.

932.

Then said the noble Siegfried : "The hounds I value not,
Save but a single setter, who such a scent hath got
That he the track will follow where'er the game hath led ;
Here's to a merry hunting !" Kriemhilda's husband said.

933.

Thereon an aged huntsman took with him a sleuth-hound,
And brought the noble hunters to where much game they found
Without too long a-seeking. The comrades then did hunt
Whatever broke from covert, as sportsmen keen are wont.

934.

Whate'er the setter mark'd him, that slew with his own hand
Siegfried the doughty hero, who came from Netherland.
His steed so swiftly bore him, that naught could him outrun ;
Praise above all the others upon this chase he won.

935.

In all he put his hand to alert he was enow ;
 Of all the beasts, the first one that he to death did do
 An ox was, strong and savage, that with his hand he fell
 And then he, on a sudden, a lion grim beheld.

936.

E'en as the hound aroused it he with his bow let fly,
 On which a sharpen'd arrow he'd fitted hastily.
 After the shot the lion but three bounds further ran ;
 Whereon his hunting comrades to thank Siegfried began

937.

There after he an elk slew, and then a buffalo,
 And then four sturdy bisons, a savage stag also.
 His steed so swiftly bore him that naught could get away
 Of harts and hinds scarce any there were he fail'd to slay

938.

A huge wild boar the sleuth-hound had routed from his lair
 And when to flee he turn'd him right in his path was there
 The hero of the hunting, all ready for the fight ;
 The savage brute did straightway charge at the valiant knight

939.

This boar Kriemhilda's husband then with his broadsword
 Did like no other huntsman so easily could do.
 And when he thus had felled him, they put in leash the hound
 Whose name was talk'd of all Burgundy around.

940.

His huntsmen: "If 'tis for us to say,
 And Siegfried, a few live beasts to slay
 Empty for us both wood and wold
 That worthy thane and bold.

941.

Then suddenly, on all sides, were heard great noise and cries.
From dogs and men together such tumult did arise
That all the woodland echoed, and eke the mountain-side
For four-and-twenty leash-hounds the hunters had untied.

942.

Then many a forest creature must unto death be done,
Since every hunter fancied that he might be the one
To win the prize for hunting: but no award could be
Until beside the camp-fire stout Siegfried they did see.

943.

The hunting, though 'twas over, was not yet brought to end:
For some, with burdens laden, to camp their way did wend,
Of beast fells bringing many, and game a goodly store.
What piles of it for cooking the king's camp-servants bore!

944.

Then to the high-born hunters the king would have it known
That he to dine was ready. * Then all at once was blown
The hunting-horn, right loudly, that all might know around
That now the noble princes would at the camp be found.

945.

With one of Siegfried's huntsmen: "Sir, I have heard but now,
By sounding of a horn, that 'tis time for us to go
Back to the camp: in answer I will my bugle wind."
Then went the loud blasts flying their followers to find.

946.

Then spake the noble Siegfried: "Now let us leave the wood!"
His hunter bore him smoothly: and all in haste they rode.
They startled, with their clatter, a grisly brute and grim,—
A savage bear. Then, turning to those who followed him,

M

935.

In all he put his hand to alert he was enow
 Of all the beasts, the first one that he to death
 An ox was, strong and savage, that with his horn
 And then he, on a sudden, a lion grim beheld.

936.

E'en as the hound aroused it he with his bow
 On which a sharpen'd arrow he'd fitted hastily
 After the shot the lion but three bounds forth
 Whereon his comrades to thank Siegmund.

937.

There after he saw, and then a buffalo
 And then a stag, and then a stag and
 His steed he caught com
 Of harts were he

A hound he saw, and then a stag
 And then a stag, and then a stag
 The hound he caught com
 The hound he caught com

with his
 could
 they put in
 all Burgundy

"It was
 a few days
 us both
 thy room

much hereat;—
 and to eat,
 no wine?
 of mine!

one should take."
 only spake:
 ay-and-by;
 on dry."

and list to me,
 to be
 looks there,
 of care!"

its, methinks, are
 and unmix'd wine
 to do,
 the Rhine unto."

his and bold,
 bold,—
 old go."
 o mickle woe.

so sorely smit:
 ard to quit;
 plain wend.
 on towards its end.

971.

The game that had been slaughter'd by Siegfried's cunning han
They bade men pile on wagons, and carry through the land.
And everyone who saw it his praise and honour spake.
Right grievously did Hagen his troth to Siegfried break.

972.

Whilst to the shady lindens they were upon their way,
Cried Hagen, lord of Tronjé: "Oft have I heard men say
That to Kriemhilda's husband no one a match could be
When he would show his paces: ay! will he let us see!"

973.

Then spake the Netherlander Siegfried, the valiant:
"Now is the time for trying, if ye a wager want,
From here unto the fountain; so soon as it be done
The onlookers shall settle which is the foremost one."

974.

"Now verily we'll try it," the warrior Hagen said.
Then quoth the stalwart Siegfried: "If ye come in ahead,
Before your feet I'll lay me full length upon the grass."
When Gunther heard the promise, how glad at heart he was!

975.

Then spake the bold thane further: "Yet something more I'
say,
I'll carry all the clothing that I have worn to-day,—
My spear and eke my buckler, and all my hunting gear."
His sword and quiver bound he around him then and there.

976.

But they, the king and Hagen, their upper clothes did doff:
In two white shirts one saw them stand ready to be off.
As fleet as two wild panthers they through the clover ran:
Yet at the spring bold Siegfried came in the foremost man.

977.

In all he put his hand to he won the prize from all.
Straightway his sword he loosen'd and let his quiver fall ;
Against a bough of linden he let his stout spear rest ;
Close by the flowing fountain now stood the stately guest.

978.

And herein also Siegfried did manifest his worth :
He laid his shield beside him where flow'd the fountain forth,
But, greatly as he thirsted, the hero tasted not
Before the king had drunken : base thanks from him he got.

979.

Cool was the spring of water, and clean, and bright, and good ;
And Gunther bent him downwards to the refreshing flood ;
As soon as he had quenched his thirst, away he came ;
Then ready was bold Siegfried and would have done the same.

980.

His courtesy and breeding, then met with their reward :
For Hagen to the background withdrew his bow and sword.
Then sprang again towards him to where he found the spear,
And looked to find a token the hero's coat did bear.

981.

And whilst the noble Siegfried drank of the rippling flood
He stabb'd him through the cross-mark, and through the wound
his blood
Straight from his heart outspurted, and Hagen's shirt was wet ;
So foul a misdeed never befell a hero yet.

982.

He left the lance within him close to his heart stuck tight ;
And grimly then did Hagen betake himself to flight,
As in his life he never from mortal man did flee.
The stalwart Siegfried, feeling how sorely smit was he,

The game that had
They bade men play
And everyone who
Right grievously did

Whilst to the shady
Cried Hagen, lord of
That to Kriemhilda's
When he would show his

T
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time
to the
ers sh

989.

"Forwards," the dying warrior said,
 "In service, since thus ye strike me dead?
 "Unful : and thus do ye repay!
 "I will suffer for what ye've wrought this day.

990.

"So ye shall be, from this day forth,
 "For ye have wreak'd your wrath,
 "More sorely upon my body done :
 "Outred, all worthy knights shall shun."

991.

"So to where he stricken lay,
 "There was a joyless day.
 "No lamentation made.
 "No hero undismay'd.

"I'm'd also for his death.
 "Small need is there, in faith,
 "To grieve that it be done :
 "I were better left alone !"

"What art thou weeping for?
 "For sorrows o'er :
 "No 'gainst us dare to stand.
 "Perish'd by my hand !"

994.

"Said Siegfried, in reply,
 "Our deadly enmity,
 "I will maintain'd my life :
 "For Kriemhild, my wife.

All madly from
Whilst from be
The chieftain the
Then verily had

But when the kn
And saw that the
He gripp'd it from
Then vainly to e

The
to death

their colour
of body
forehead
mourning

1012.

In her sorrow cried she, that fair and gentle queen :
 O mine evil fortune ! Upon thy shield is seen
 Of any sword-stroke : thou liest murder'd there.
 I who hath done it, of death mote he be ware."

1013.

All her attendants began to wail and weep :
 O beloved lady, their grief indeed was deep
 Of their noble master, of whom they were forlorn.
 O had Hagen made good Brunhilda's scorn.

1014.

Thus spake she : "Go hence now, all of ye,
 O Siegfried's liegemen as quickly as may be.
 O round about sorrow must ye tell,
 O help to mourn brave Siegfried well."

1015.

Round them where they lay,—
 From Niblung land were they.—
 And joy fled at his word ;
 Till they the wailing heard.

1016.

Where he found the king.
 At night no sleep did bring ;
 What happ'd to him, I ween :
 He'd never more be seen.

Kriemhilda, my mistress,
 To her a sore distress
 Which cuts her to the heart :
 For thou in it hast part."

1006.

In red blood he was lying, and all his garb was wet;
 But that it was his master he did not know as yet.
 Into the room he carried the candle in his hand,
 From him did Dame Kriemhilda some ill news understand.

1007.

For, as she with her women would to the minster fare,
 The chamberlain spake to her: "My lady, stay you there!
 Right opposite the doorway a murder'd knight doth lie."
 Whereat began Kriemhilda to weep unmeasuredly.

1008.

Before she knew for certain that 'twas her husband
 Unto her mind recall'd she how Hagen questioned
 In what way he might guard him: ~~that~~ ~~for~~ ~~that~~
 An' he were dead, her pleasure

To earth down sank she
 Upon the hapless floor
 The grief of Dame
 After her swoon.

Her people saw
 But from her
 Then spake
 It was Bru

The lady
 With her
 d

then in her sorrow
Woe on mine
to find of any
and wist I who

ed."

ereon all her
th their beloved
out their noble
as heavily had

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ed.

bier ;

e,

1018.

Upstartèd Siegmund, crying : "What grief hath happenèd
Unto the fair Kriemhilda, as thou just now hast said ?"
Then spake the herald, weeping, "I cannot it withhold :
Ay ! Siegfried hath been murder'd, the Netherlander bold !"

1019.

Then spake the noble Siegmund : "Pray let this jesting be,
And of such evil stories, beware, for love of me,
The like you tell to no man,— how Siegfried hath been slain :
In such case could I never live happily again."

1020.

"If thou wilt not believe me when thou hast heard my tale,
With thine own ears 'tis easy to hear Kriemhilda wail ;
For she and all her people are mourning Siegfried dead."
Then sore afraid was Siegmund : and sad was he indeed.

1021.

Straight from his couch upsprang he, with five score of his men ;
They reach'd their hands in search of their weapons long and
keen,
And ran, grief-stricken, thither to where they heard the cries ;
Then, too, the thousand warriors of Siegfried bold did rise.

1022.

Whilst piteously the women were heard to weep and moan,
Some of the men bethought them that raiment they should don :
Ay, scarcely for their trouble could they their senses keep.
And bitter was the anguish that in their hearts lay deep.

1023.

Soon came the royal Siegmund to where Kriemhild did stand.
He spake : "Woe on the journey that brought us to this land !
Who hath thy husband taken, and reft me of my son,
And, amidst friends and kinsmen, thus murderously done ?"

the murmur of it, how
the cries of woe,
the thereof did sound.
quickly throng'd around.

For they themselves were sad.
He told them that it had,
his life.
A worthy burgher's wife.

He to devise
and of mickle size;
temper'd steel and good.
of mood.

He would soon appear.
He bear
well-beloved.
body moved.

As many a bell;
to swell.
With him,
then grim.

He
be free;
"ed's life."
mourning wife.

Howe
Yet di
Death,
She wa

Thus spak
Thi
H

... and I shall not be
... I shall not be
... I shall not be
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... I shall not be

1048.

With all their hearts they mourn'd him, the husband of Kriem-
hild,

Now masses must be chanted: the minster soon was fill'd
With men, and wives, and children,— from every side they came.
Even they who little miss'd him mourn'd Siegfried all the same.

1049.

Emot, and Giseller with him, spake: "Sister dear to me,
Now, for this death my comfort, as verily must be.
I will atone you as long as we shall live."
On the ear of Emot who could her comfort give.

1050.

On wellnigh about mid-day;
Emot used him, whereon till then he lay.
Have kept him from the grave;
Sore trouble surely gave.

1051.

Emot they wrapp'd the body round,
One unweeping there was found.
A noble woman she—
The goodly corpse to see.

1052.

Within the church begin,
They throng'd to enter in:
What offerings were made!
Good friends enough he had!

1053.

Emot to her chamberlain:
"He will be to them a bane,
I beg and hold me also dear;
That they his gold should share."

1042.

"It never need have happen'd if real your sorrow were ;
Me must ye have forgotten,— that may I well aver,—
When I was there bereft of my own belovéd one.
I would to God," said Kriemhild, "it had to me been done!"

1043.

They clave unto their lying. Kriemhild began again :
"Whoso of you is guiltless, now let him make it plain ;—
Let each before the people walk up unto the bier ;
Thereby the truth that's in him shall presently appear."

1044.

It is a wondrous marvel that oft hath happenéd :
That when one sees the slayer beside the murder'd dead,
The wounds afresh start bleeding ; as here, too, came to pass.
Whereby men saw that Hagen the malefactor was.

1045.

Again the wounds bled freely, as they had done afore ;
They who had mourn'd him sorely bewail'd him now the more.
Then spake aloud King Gunther: "I tell you everyone
'Twas vagabonds that slew him : 'twas not by Hagen done."

1046.

"These vagabonds, too surely are known to me," she spake,
"By friendly hands, God willing, we'll vengeance on them take!
Thou Gunther and thou Hagen have surely done this thing."
By this time Siegfried's warriors for strife were hankering.

1047.

Kriemhilda spake yet further: "Now share with me my need."
Then came those twain unto her who found him lying dead,—
They were her brother Gernot and Giseller the youth.
As many a man did later, these mourn'd for him in sooth.

who nothing had to bring,
 with gold for offering
 Since life he could not have,
 they many thousand gave.

in all the land around,
 goodly folk were found.
 nor got ample store :
 that love to him they bore.

at the hour of Mass,
 — that by the minster was,—
 was fill'd from end to end.
 to a well-loved friend.

deed, it hath been said,
 even more, were paid
 even to the poor.
 now no more.

chants were sung,
 the throng ;
 him to his grave.
 and cries forth gave.

follow'd then ;
 and of men.
 ang and read withal ;
 o gave him burial.

1054.

There was no child so little, who any wit might have,
But join'd in the almsgiving, ere he was laid in grave.
More than a hundred masses were sung ere day was done
And Siegfried's friends and kinsmen came thronging ev'ry one.

1055.

When ended was the chanting the people went away.
Then spake the lady Kriemhild: "Ye must not let me stay
Alone to watch beside him, this knight exceeding brave.
My joys are, with his body, all buried in the grave.

1056.

"Three days and three nights longer here would I keep him still,
Until of my dear husband my heart has had its fill.
Then what if God should order that death should take me too?
Then would poor Kriemhild's sorrows no longer trouble you."

1057.

The people from the city now homewards went their way.
The priests and monks Kriemhilda besought with her to stay,
And eke her own attendants, to watch beside the knight.
Forbidding was the darkness and wearisome the light.

1058.

From eating and from drinking did many a man abstain.
If any cared to take it, to them it was made plain
That they might have in plenty: Siegmund of that took care.
And yet, full many a labour the Niblung-folk must share:

1059.

For three whole days, unceasing,— the story thus we hear—
They who had skill in singing must needs the burden bear
Of chanting many an office. What alms to them folk paid!
They who were poor aforetime now wealth in plenty had.



1066.

Or ever Siegfried's widow had come unto the grave,
Her faithful heart with sorrow such bitter strife did have
That they must needs revive her with water from the spring;
Her bitterness of sorrow was past all measuring.

1067.

It was a mickle wonder that strength again she found.
With cries of pity, helping, the women throng'd around.
Then spake the Queen: "O liegemen of Siegfried, hearken ye!
I pray you of your fealty a favour grant to me,—

1068.

"That after all my sorrow this small grace I may gain,
And on his goodly features may set my eyes again."
So long did she beseech them, with all her sorrow's strength,
That they the splendid coffin must break apart at length.

1069.

And then they brought the lady to where her love did lie,
And she his fair head lifted, with white hand tenderly,
And in his death she kiss'd him,— the noble knight and good;
Her shining eyes, for sorrow, were weeping tears of blood.

1070.

It was a piteous parting, if ever there was one.
And so away they bore her; she could not go alone,
For in a swoon and senseless that noble wife lay low;
Her life, for weal appointed, was wellnigh lost in woe.

1071.

When now their noble master within his grave was laid,
Unmeasured was the sorrow that all his followers had,
Who from the Niblung country had borne him company;
And little joy or gladness in Siegmund was to see.

XVIII.] HOW SIEGMUND WENT BACK TO HIS OWN LAND. 183

1072.

Amongst them there were many who, for their sorrow's sake,
Till those three days were ended nor meat nor drink did take.
Yet could they not their bodies abandon utterly :
So feasting follow'd sorrow, as evermore will be.

ADVENTURE XVIII.—HOW SIEGMUND WENT
BACK TO HIS OWN LAND.

1073.

Kriemhilda's husband's father had to her presence come.
And to the queen thus spake he : " We now would fain go home ;
I trow that we in Rhineland, unwelcome guests must be.
Kriemhilda, dearest lady, come to my land with me.

1074.

" Since that your noble husband, by treason underhand,
Hath from us all been taken here in this very land,
You must not overlook it : I will be kind to you
For love of my son Siegfried ; doubt not that this is true.

1075.

Henceforward also, Lady, to you the power I'll yield
That the bold warrior Siegfried did teach you how to wield.
The land and the crown likewise shall subject be to you ;
And all of Siegfried's vassals will gladly service do."

1076.

Then were the servants bidden that thence they were to ride ;—
It was a mighty business the horses to provide !
Amidst their bitter foemen to dwell were sorry cheer.
They bade the dames and maidens to seek their travelling gear.

1089.

An. When we around they answer'd : "Then must we fain confess
 Th. That to the first time, truly, our hearts know bitterness,
 He. Since we indeed are willing here with our foes to bide :
 Th. On such a grievous journey did heroes never ride."

1090.

"He. Said she : "Ye may, God-speeding, without foreboding fare :
 Th. Safe-comit shall be given— of that I'll have a care—
 Then From here to Siegmund's country. As for my darling child,
 For d. Unto ye bring : I trust him, and to your mercies mild !"

1091.

"Of th. When they were well persuaded that thence she would not go,
 Th. Then did the likes all of Siegmund did weep for very woe.
 He. For of that sorrow was Siegmund when his leave
 Th. He took of Kriemhilda ! Then knew he how to grieve.

1092.

He. "These great doings," the noble king quoth he :
 Th. Of pleasure there ne'er again can be
 He. To his kinsfolk, than this time has been.
 Th. Shall we henceforward in such a way be seen."

He. "And might he not have seen of Siegfried spake :
 Th. To this land make,
 He. And our master low.
 Th. "Our enemies enow !"

He. "mournfully did say,
 Th. "and."

III.] HOW SIEGMUND WENT BACK TO HIS OWN LAND. 187

1095.

in Worms without an escort unto the Rhine they rode ;
ll might they, notwithstanding, be confident of mood,
it if they should of foemen an onset have to ward,
: hands of stalwart Niblungs would serve them for a guard.

1096.

ve did they take of no man ere they set forth to ride.
Giselher and Gernot were presently espied
indly coming t'wards him : his sorrow made them grieve,
oon these gallant heroes did bring him to believe.

1097.

hen the princely Gernot right courteously said :
God in Heaven my witness ! that Siegfried now is dead
rough no fault on my part nor have I heard men tell
wish'd him any evil can I mourn him well."

1098.

had they a s at Giselher's own hand :
carefully he in time, from out the land.
ing and is to N not home.
little e lred them come !

after y say.
riemb g day by day
e her ther heart or mood,
only r and good.

gantly sat :
took no thought for that,
I turn to her again.
did wring her heart with pain.

1089.

With one accord they answer'd: "Then must we fain confess
That for the first time, truly, our hearts know bitterness,
Since you indeed are willing here with our foes to bide:
On such a grievous journey did heroes never ride."

1090.

Said she: "Ye may, God-speeding, without foreboding fare:
Safe-conduct shall be given— of that I'll have a care—
From here to Siegmund's country. As for my darling child,
Unto ye knights I trust him, and his mercies mild!"

When they were well persuaded, she would not go,
The lieges all of Siegmund, woe.
How full of bitter sorrow, when his leave
He took of dame Kriemhild, how he how to grieve.

"Woe be on
"An ending
To king
No more

the noble king quoth he:
ne'er again can be
to us has been.
may he seen."

Then lo
"Yet a
When
They

we to this
to find our masters low,
out enemies snow!"

1095.

Worms without an escort unto the Rhine they rode ;
ight they, notwithstanding, be confident of mood,
they should of foemen an onset have to ward,
eds of stalwart Niblungs would serve them for a guard.

1096.

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er and Gernot were presently espied
coming t'wards him : his sorrow made them grieve,
ess heroes did bring him to believe.

1097.

ernot right courteously said :
witness ! that Siegfried now is dead
y part, nor have I heard men tell
: so can I mourn him well."

1098.

conduct at Giseller's own hand :
em in time, from out the land.
arriors to Netherland got home.
kindred rejoice to see them come !

1099.

after I cannot rightly say.
riemhilda bewailing day by day
her comfort, in either heart or mood,
was true to her and good.

at :
hought for that,
er again.
her heart with pain.

ADVENTURE XIX.—HOW THE NIBELUNG HOARD
WAS BROUGHT TO WORMS.

1101.

Now when the noble Kriemhild a widow thus was made
Count Eckewart was with her, and in the land he stay'd
With all his men, and daily he served her without fail,
And helped his lady often his master to bewail.

1102.

At Worms, hard by the minster, they built for her a hall :
'Twas very wide and lofty, and richly deck'd withal.
There, with her own attendants, all joylessly sat she.
She loved the church's service and went there willingly.

1103.

From where her love lay buried, she seldom was away ;
With sorrow-laden spirit she went there every day.
She prayed to God Almighty to keep his soul aright.
And faithfully and often bewailéd was the knight.

1104.

Uté and all her women to cheer her aye were fain ;
Yet was the heart within her so sorely smit with pain,
However they might comfort she took not any heed.
She had for her belovéd such all-surpassing need,

1105.

As for a well-loved husband no other wife ere found.
Thus might one see how virtues in her did much abound.
Unto her end she mourn'd him, as long as she had life,
And soon a mighty vengeance took valiant Siegfried's wfe !

1106.

So after all this sorrow— 'tis truth—she did abide
Until the fourth year's halving from when her husband died;
Nor all this time 'twixt Gunther and her did speech arise,
Nor did she once on Hagen, her enemy, set eyes.

1107.

Then Hagen spake, of Tronjé: "Could you not so contrive
That you might with your sister in friendly fashion live?
That so unto this country might come the Niblung gold:
If but the queen were friendly, your gain were manifold."

1108.

He said: "We must attempt it; my brothers are with her;
We'll beg them so to urge her that she be friendlier,
Until at last prevail we that she thereto agree."
Quoth Hagen: "I misdoubt me that that will ever be."

1109.

He presently bade Ortwein unto her court to go
Likewise the margrave Gere: and both of them did so.
And Giseler the youthful and Gernot, too, they brought,
Who straightway Dame Kriemhilda in friendly wise besought.

1110.

To her the valiant Gernot of Burgundy then said:
"Too long hast thou, O Lady, bewail'd thy Siegfried dead!
The king to you will swear that by him he was not slain.
Still day by day one hears thee so bitterly complain."

1111.

Said she: "None doth accuse him: 'twas Hagen's hand that slew;
And where he might be stricken from me alone he knew.
How could I have believed that such hate to him he bore?
More care would I have taken"—the Queen said furthermore—

1112.

"Ere any word of mine had his noble life betray'd :
 Then little cause for weeping should I, poor wife, have
 No more can I have kindness for those who this have
 Then Giselher besought her, the brave and comely one

1113.

"To greet the king I'm willing," she did at last declare
 With his best friends before her one saw him soon appear
 But Hagen durst at no time within her presence go
 His guiltiness well knew he ; 'twas he who wrought her

1114.

Since she her hate to Gunther was willing to forswear,
 'Twould better have beseem'd him to kiss her then and
 Were't not that by his counsel her sorrows had been m
 He might have met Kriemhilda with boldness undismay

1115.

Se'er was a reconciliation, when friend by friend was n
 More tearfully accomplish'd : her sorrow rankled yet.
 Saw only one amongst them, she pardon'd every one :
 The se'er were slain, if Hagen the murder had not done

1116.

Ye Not very long thereafter they brought it so about
 Ho. The mighty hoard came out
 Shu. To the Rhine conveyed
 And rightly hers was made.

1117.

who went for it, and with him Giselher
 his liegemen, who had commands from
 from where it lay unseen,
 with trusty friends, had been

1118.

Now when they saw the Rhine-men coming the hoard to take,
The ever-valiant Albrich unto his comrades spake :
"We dare not keep the treasure withholden from her power,
Seeing the noble lady can claim it as her dower.

1119.

"Yet never would the matter have come to such a pass,
Had we not had," said Albrich, "the evil luck, alas !
The goodly cap of darkness with Siegfried's self to lose :
Which fair Kriemhilda's husband was ever wont to use.

1120.

"Now evil unto Siegfried hath happen'd since the day
That from our hands the hero the Tarnhelm took away,
And all this land by conquest did to his service bind."
Then went the treasure-keeper straightway the keys to find.

1121.

At the hill-foot were waiting the Queen Kriemhilda's men
And sundry of her kinsmen ; the treasure bore they then
Down to the lake-shore, lading their vessel with the same :
Then o'er the waves they took it and up the Rhine-stream came.

1122.

Now may you of this treasure a wondrous story hear :
It took a dozen wagons it from the mount to bear ;
Four days and nights they ceased not to carry it away ;
And each must make the journey, so laden, thrice a day.

1123.

Naught else but gold and jewels within this treasure lay ;
And had one taken from it what would the whole world pay,
'Twould not have seem'd to eyesight of one mark's value quit.
Ay ! Not without some reason did Hagen covet it.

The gun was fired at [redacted] [redacted]
Whoever [redacted] [redacted]
In all the [redacted] [redacted]
On [redacted] [redacted]

Agency/Office	U.S. Army, Department of Defense
And the Title	Chief of Staff, U.S. Army
The organization	U.S. Army, Department of Defense
Name of individual	John A. Wickham

And even were he - ~~some~~
And she once more - ~~in~~
Gladly to him wou - ~~d~~
For never could a be - ~~liever~~

Now that she had the treasure
Full many a stranger
Her bounty gave so
This queen had many

To poor men and to
so much, that Hagar
the long enough, the
there in her

Since Gunther said: "We shall do with _____
_____ could I compare _____
_____ gold and silver _____

1130.

But to the king said Hagen : " No prudent man and wise
Would leave to such a woman a treasure of this size.
In gifts we'll see her spend it and squander the whole store,
And then the bold Burgundians may rue it evermore."

1131.

Then answer'd him king Gunther : " To her an oath I swore
That I to her would never do any evil more ;
And that will I abide by, for she my sister is."
But thereunto said Hagen : " Let me be blamed for this."

1132.

The oaths that they had taken they reckon'd all for naught.
And from the widow's keeping the mighty hoard they brought,
And quietly did Hagen of all the keys get hold.
Wroth was her brother Gernot when he the truth was told.

1133.

Then spake the noble Giseler : " Hagen a deal of ill
Hath done unto my sister : reckon with him I will.
And were he not my kinsman, 'twould stand him in his life."
Then once again to weeping fell Siegfried's widow'd wife.

1134.

Then up and spake Lord Gernot : " Ere we be troubled aye
By reason of this treasure, we'll take it all away
And sink it in the Rhine-stream ; then will it no man's be."
To Giseler her brother then went she woefully.

1135.

She spake : " Belovéd brother, thou must take thought for me ;
Of both my life and substance the guardian thou shouldst be."
Then spake he to the lady : " This will I undertake
When we have home returned : we have a ride to take."

1136.

The king and all his kinsmen now left their land beh
The best of all were taken that one therein could fin
None stay'd save Hagen only ; that did he for the ha
He bore unto Kriemhilda ; with purpose did he wait.

1137.

Before the mighty king came back to his home again
Hagen had meanwhile managed the treasure great to
Down in the Rhine at Lochheim he sank it bodily.
He hoped yet to enjoy it : but that was not to be.

1138.

The princes came back shortly, and with them many
Of her great loss Kriemhilda to make complaint bega
And all her maids and ladies : great was their grief, in
Ready with faithful service was Giselher the youth.

1139.

They one and all said : " Hagen hath done us a foul
Then from the princes' anger he kept aloof for long,
Till he regain'd their favour ; and so they left him fre
Yet never to Kriemhilda could he more hateful be.

1140.

Before Hagen of Tronjé had hidden thus the hoard,
They made a pact together and with strong oaths assu
That it should remain hidden as long as each should
None for himself should take it, nor to another give.

1141.

So now again with sorrow her heart was desolate :
First for her husband's murder, and now that her esta
Had all been taken from her. Thus she became a prey
Unto her grief for ever until her dying day.

1142.

After the death of Siegfried, as verily appears,
With many troubles burthen'd she dwelt for thirteen years;
And all the while could never forget the warrior dead.
She aye was faithful to him : that all the people said.

ADVENTURE XX.—HOW KING ETZEL SENT TO
BURGUNDY AFTER KRIEMHILDA.

1143.

Now on a time it happen'd that lady Helka died;
Then was King Etzel minded to woo another bride.
His friends all bade him look to the land of Burgundy,
Towards a high-born widow ; Kriemhilda named was she.

1144.

Soon after the fair Helka departed had this life,
Quoth they : " If thou would'st ever possess a noble wife,—
The highest and most worthy that king did ever have,
Then take this self-same lady, widow of Siegfried brave."

1145.

" How might that be accomplish'd," then said the mighty king,
" Seeing I am a heathen and ne'er had christening ?
The lady is a Christian ; she never would agree.
A miracle must happen, if this should ever be."

1146.

The ready ones made answer : " What if perchance she should ?
With thy high name to help thee and all thy substance good,
To win the noble lady one very well might try.
To woo so fair a person would please you verily."

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Who
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1142.

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ADVENTURE XX.—HOW KING ETZEL SENT TO
BURGUNDY AFTER KRIEMHILDA.

1143.

ow on a time it happen'd that lady Helka died;
hen was King Etzel minded to woo another bride.
his friends made him look to the land of Burgundy,
towards which a widow; Kriemhilda named was she.

1144.

Helka departed had this life,
thou would'st ever possess a noble wife,—
d most worthy that king did ever have,
self-same lady, widow married brave."

1145.

ght that be accomplish'd did the mighty king,
am a heathen and heathen christening?
a Christian; and he would agree.
ust happen and he would ever be."

What if perchance she should?
and all thy substance good,
ery well might try.
ould please you verily."

THE LAY OF THE NIBELINGS.

1140. "I have any one of you
and the the country know?
with from Harnstet. name:
the guest of noble name

1141. the noble knights and more
each eye and behave
and were not have taught:
have their mistakes wronging."

1142. "Friend, I would part of this
to wear the crown with me?
as has to me been said?
must never be dismayed."

1143. beauty likeness she
ay. If this world could be
of a wife more fair.
that she may be of good cheer."

1144. "If dear to thee and I
as Rindiger. If dear to thee and I
it ever be more to the
as truly as may be:
have compassed thoroughly."

1145. "If dear to thee and I
as Rindiger. If dear to thee and I
it ever be more to the
as truly as may be:
have compassed thoroughly."

1146. "If dear to thee and I
as Rindiger. If dear to thee and I
it ever be more to the
as truly as may be:
have compassed thoroughly."

1153.

Rüdeger made answer: —a mighty margrave he—
I thy riches covet, that were unpraiseworthy.
Into the Rhine thy message to bear I shall be glad
at charge of mine own fortune, which from thy hands I had."

1154.

Then spake the mighty sovereign: "Now when wilt thou fare
hence
To seek this lovely lady? May God give thee defence
And honour in the journey, and eke this lady mine,
May she to us, luck helping, a gracious ear incline."

1155.

Rüdeger spake further: "Ere yet we leave the land,
I will repair both raiment and weapons to our hand,
Before the princes due honour we may have.
Into the Rhine-land five hundred warriors brave.

1156.

He and mine beholding, the king of Burgundy
Every man among them, he can testify
He'er from king in those days such a journey went
With any men or better than the Rhine hast sent.

1158.

And be it not displeasing to that great ruler, found
That, noble love obeying, I am wedlock bound
To Siegfried, son of that king whom hast thou here beheld.
In honour great he is, and truth for ever held."
1158.
Though she was wife unto that knight,
Precious in my sight,
I will not e'er look disdainfully;
Right well she pleaseth me."

1171.

Then said the margrave to her : " Beloved wife of mine,
The men who hence are riding with me unto the Rhine,
All kindly must thou offer with them thy stores to share :
When heroes fare right nobly more stout of heart they are."

1172.

She answered : " There is no man who cares to take of me,
To whom whate'er beseemeth I give not willingly,
Or ever hence depart ye, thou and thy fighting men."
Then said to her the margrave : " So doth it please me then."

1173.

Ay, and what noble garments they from the store-rooms bare !
For every noble warrior there was a plenteous share.
All lined they were with peltry downwards from throat to spur ;
What best his purpose suited was chosen of Rüdeger.

1174.

Upon the seventh morning from Bechelaren rode
The host with all his warriors. Weapons and raiment good
They bore with them in plenty through the Bavarian land ;
Nor on the road were harass'd by any robber band.

1175.

Within a twelve days' journey they to the Rhine did ride ;
The tidings of their coming small chance there was to hide.
Some to the king gave warning, and eke his men did tell,
That stranger-guests were coming. The host to asking fell

1176.

If they were known to any ? that was he fain to know.
One saw their sumpter-horses so heavy-laden go :
That they were very wealthy was plain enough to see.
In the great town was found them a hostel presently.

1165.

to Bechelaren within the town did fare,
his fellow travellers bade kindly welcome there,
board and lodging. Good quarters each one had.
Gotelinda to see him come was glad.

1166.

his well-loved daughter, the little margravine,
at her father's coming could ne'er have gladder been.
Out of Huns' land how glad she was to see!
The noble maiden accosted merrily:

1167.

heartily be welcome my father and his men!"
Thank her, fair words were spoken then
The daughter, by many a worthy knight.
Meanour Gotlinda read aright.

1168.

at night-time how eager she lay,
sought him the margravine to say
ing from Huns' land had bidden him to go.
wife Got'linda sadly let thee know.

my man seek another wife,
departed hath this life.
unto the Rhine ride we;
a mighty queen to be."

1170.

that that may come to pass
hour, how much she doth surpass.
belike, in days to be,
land the queen's crown willingly."

1183.

Then Hagen spake of Tronjé, and in a loud voice cried :
" Now in God's name be welcome ye thanes who hither ride,
The Warden of Bechlaren, and each one of his men."
An honourable greeting the doughty Huns had then.

1184.

King Gunther's nearest kinsmen, came forth to where they were,
The lord of Metz, Sir Ortwein, then said to Rüdeger :
" Ne'er yet in all our life-time have we until this day
Set eyes on guests so gladly : that may I truly say."

1185.

Thanks gave they for the greeting unto the warriors all ;
So with their noble escort, they went unto the hall.
And there they found King Gunther with a gallant company,
And from his throne upstood he, such was his courtesy.

1186.

With what right courtly breeding did he the envoys meet !
Gernot, as well as Gunther, was full of zeal to greet
The guest and eke his liegemen, as did his rank demand.
Good Rüdeger King Gunther himself took by the hand.

1187.

Unto the seat he led him, on which himself he sat :
Then to the strangers served they,— all gladly did they that—
Of right good mead full beakers, and of the best of wine
That ever one could meet with in all the land of Rhine.

1188.

Now Giseler and Gere had both of them appear'd ;
And Dankwart, too, and Volker, who all of them had heard
About the guests arriving ; they were in gladsome mood :
Before the king they greeted the noble knights and good.

1177.

unknown ones were given an abode,
 some nobles vast was the heed bestow'd :
 whence the warriors to the Rhine had found

Hagen, if haply he could say.

1178.

Walt of Tronjé: "I have not seen them yet,
 are you when sight of them I get,
 come a-riding into this land. I trow
 strangers if naught of them I know."

1179.

Rüdeger a place of lodging had.
 in rich apparel clad,
 and so to court they rode.
 right well-devised in mode.

1180.

"For all that I can tell—
 somewhat of a spell—
 Rüdeger might have,
 noble knight and brave."

replied straightway,
 "come this day?"
 the king did forbear,
 "was Rüdeger.

1181.

they did hasten everyone.
 five hundred knights stand down.
 right welcome were they made,
 gallantly array'd.

1195.

"Childrer of noble prince, whom she did rear of late—
And therefore is the count in lamentable state:
These now, alas, have in our hand to rear them faithfully,
I doubt there is no ending to the king's misery."

1196.

"Requite him God," said Gunther, "for that to me he sends
So willingly his service, as he into my friends!
The greeting thou has brought me, most gladly have I heard:
My kinsmen and my lieges shall hear his good word."

1197.

Then spake from the Burgundians, Gernot the warrior:
"The world fair Helka's dying may rue for evermore,
For all her many virtues, which she in cherish knew."
The doughty knight, Sir Hagen, agreed that this was true.

1198.

But Rudeger said further, the high ambassador:
"Since you, O king, allow me, I have to tell you more:
Of that which my dear master hath bidden me fulfil;
Since from the death of Helka things have with him gone ill."

1199.

"It hath been told my master that, Siegfried being dead,
Emhilda is a widow. If this be so, indeed,
You to her will grant it, then she a crown shall wear
Of King Etzel's warriors: this have I to declare."

1200.

The mighty monarch answer'd (in courteous mood was he):
"I'll tell her my opinion, if she perchance agree.
That you our answer in three days' time shall know,
Should I, ere I've asked her, say unto Etzel, no?"

1201.

they had good lodgings made ready for each guest.
 provided were they, that Rüdeger confess'd
 had friends in plenty amongst King Gunther's men ;
 and once served Hagen, so Hagen served him then.

1202.

Hagen abode there till the third day was come.
 giving a council summon'd, (as was his wise custom)
 giving of his kinsmen if they would deem it right
 that Kriemhild should to Etzel her faith in wedlock plight.

1203.

all, save only Hagen, agreed with one accord ;
 he unto the warrior, to Gunther spake this word :
 you are rightly minded, so will you take good heed,
 that, even though she wish it, you will not do this deed."

1204.

"And wherefore," answer'd Gunther, "should I not do this
 thing?
 hate'er of love the future unto the queen may bring,
 surely shall not grudge her: sister she is to me.
 We ought ourselves to seek it, if for her good it be."

1205.

But once again spake Hagen: "With further talk be done!
 Knew you as much of Etzel as I of him have known,—
 And were she him to marry, as I have heard you say,—
 Then would you see good reason, at length to rue the day."

1206.

"And wherefore?" answered Gunther, "since I should take good
 care
 "Never to come so nigh him, e'en though my sister were
 His wife, that I need suffer from any hate of his."
 But once again said Hagen: "I'll ne'er agree to this."

Then messengers to Gernot ~~and~~ Giselher they sent,
 To ask of these two princes ~~if they~~ were well content
 To have Kriemhilda marry ~~the rich and noble king,~~
 So Hagen still gainsayed it, ~~the king~~ no following.

Then spake of the Burgundians ~~the~~ warrior Giselher :
 "Now may you show, friend Hagen, ~~that~~ loyal still you are:
 Make good to her the evil ~~that you to her have done :~~
 If aught may bring her fortune, ~~that~~ should you leave alone.

"You've wrought unto my sister ~~such~~ evil manifold,"—
 So Giselher spake further,— ~~the~~ knight of spirit bold :
 "That she hath had good reason ~~to hold you in despite,~~
 Ne'er yet was any woman ~~bereft of more delight."~~

"That am I well aware of ~~and~~ willing to allow,
 And should she marry Etzel ~~and~~ live for long enow,
 Shall do us yet much evil, ~~howe'er~~ she it contrive ;
 So many a goodly warrior ~~to serve her there doth live."~~

While valiant Gernot ~~to~~ Hagen answered :
 "It ~~can~~ it behoves us, ~~until~~ they both be dead,
~~that we ride not~~ into King Etzel's land,
~~thus honour doth demand."~~

Hagen : "No man can me gainsay
 Kriemhild wear Helga's crown one day,
 howe'er it may be done :
 to leave the thing alone."

1213.

Wrathfully cried Giselher, of Uté fair the son :
 Need not all be traitors, though thou perchance be one !
 Your doth befall her, right joyful should we be,
 Ere thou sayest, Hagen, I'll serve her faithfully."

1214.

Hagen heard that saying, anger'd was he in mood :
 Giselher and Gernot, proud warriors both and good,
 Mighty Gunther likewise, did all of them agree
 If it pleased Kriemhilda they would no hindrance be.

1215.

He spoke the princely Gere: "The lady I'll advise
 Let she do let King Etzel find favour in her eyes :
 Many knights obey him, and suit and service owe,—
 Yet may make her happy in spite of all her woe."

1216.

Then went the ready warrior where Kriemhild he did see ;
 He graciously received him : how quickly then spake he !
 Well may you greet me, lady, and give me herald's bread,
 Or good luck comes to save you now out of all your need.

1217.

For love of you, dear lady, lo ! there hath hither sent
 One of the best and greatest that e'er had government
 Your realm with highest honour, or ever crown shall wear ;
 And noble knights sue for him : your brother bids declare."

1218.

Then spake the sorrow-laden : "Now God prohibit thee
 And all my friends from making a mockery of me !
 Of me, the poor forlorn one ! what could I be to one
 Who heart-felt love hath ever from a good woman won ?"

1219.

Th
To
To
Sir

She sorely strove against it; but presently to
There came her brother Gernot: and the lady
There kindly brought her to be of cheerfulness
If she the king would marry, 'twould be for it

1220.

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So one of them was able the lady to persua
That she should not be willing another man
That still he should search her: "At least
If thou might'st she wilt grant us— the messe

1221.

"Y
So

"That will I not refuse," replied the noble
"For gladly would I look on Sir Rüdiger in
For all his many woes. If he it had not been
Hence was the song, 'I would have stay'

1222.

He said: "Tomorrow morning, I pray ye
The morning chamber: then will I let him
Hence will I go: ye will him and
The other guests with me: break forth in

1223.

"The morning chamber: ye will him and
The other guests with me: break forth in
The morning chamber: ye will him and
The other guests with me: break forth in

1224.

gain
of the

1225.

Highborn dame Kriemhilda her heart with sorrow sore
 Rüdeger was waiting,— the goodly warrior
 bound her in the rainbow she wore for every day
 none the less her women had done & their best they

1226.

rose and went to meet him and by the door she stood
 & unto Etzel's liegeman she gave a welcome good
 though but eleven comrades he came thence to her
 worship had he, for never came to her messenger.

1227.

he bade them all be seated,— the leader and his men
 while before her standing they saw her margraves twain,
 counts Eckewart and Gere,— both noble knights and good.
 for sake of her, their mistress, none seemed of joyful mood.

1228.

they saw beside sitting full many a lady fair.
 or nothing grow had Kriemhild any care.
 the rain from was wet with tear-drops hot,
 for fall grave Kriemhilda's grief to note.

1229.

the envoy: "Daughter of kingly race,
 comrades who here with me have place,
 grant us that we before you stand
 errand that brings us to this land."

1230.

you granted." the queen in answer said,
 granted; for I am purposéd
 thou art a herald good."
 unwilling was her mood.

The day, the hour, the place, the sun was
A well, a living, breathing, of such that in the air
The air was, it was, what seems it is, it is
Anger, and hearted sorrow, can give such many is

1235.

My noble master to give thy love thou'lt reign,
Thy wealthy kingdoms thou shalt be sovereign;
I'll also give you full thirty princes' lands,
Of which was conquer'd by his all-potent hands

1236

Thou shalt be mistress of many a worthy knight,
Whom thou shalt have in service owe in fight;
And thou shalt have beneath her sway,
And thus did the true knight say

1237.

"I likewise give thee, as he doth bid me say—
 giving thou deignest to wear the crown one day—
 power that ever he unto Helka gave:
 Etzel's vassals authority shalt have."

1238.

the queen: "What pleasure remains for me in life,
 should I covet to be a hero's wife?
 have I suffer'd all through the death of one,
 I may be joyless, until my life be done."

1239.

more spake the Hunsman: "Most high and noble
 queen,
 along with Etzel so glorious would be seen,
 would it be but gladness, if this should come to pass:
 by a handsome warrior the mighty monarch has."

1240.

huntsmen of Queen Helka, the maids that follow thee,
 make with one another a single company;
 at which the warriors shall merry be of mood.
 Fare ye well, lady; in sooth 'tis for thy good!"

1241.

answered: "Now let this parley be
 then come again to me
 answer to what you have at heart."
 warrior agree, and so depart.

1242.

hostel had all returned home,
 ready for Giselher to come,
 mother: and unto both did vow,
 save weeping was fitting for her now.

1255.

But naught avail'd their praying, until that Rūdeger
All privately did whisper into the great queen's ear,
That all she ever suffer'd he would make good again.
Whereat her great misliking somewhat began to wane.

1256.

Unto the queen thus spake he: "Let now your weeping be.
If you among the Hunsfolk had ne'er a friend save me,
And all my trusty kinsmen, and eke my liegemen true,
Hath any done you evil right dearly should he rue."

1257.

Thenceforth the lady's humour somewhat more gentle grew.
She said: "An oath now give me: whatever men may do
That you will be the first one to right mine injury."
Whereto the margrave answer'd: "That will I readily."

1258.

With all his men did Rūdeger swear by an oath to her
That he would serve her truly; and that no warrior
Should ever aught deny her, throughout King Etzel's land,
In what concern'd her honour. So pledged her Rūdeger's hand.

1259.

Then, faithful-hearted, thought she: "Since on my will to wait
I've met with friends so many, I'll let the people prate
How'er they have a mind to, of me, poor wretched wife!
What if I yet have vengeance for my dear husband's life?"

1260.

She then said: "Since Etzel holdeth so many knights in fee,
I'll command them, and do what pleaseth me.
He also, I shall have much to give:
I'll make hateful Hagen of all my goods deprive."

1261.

Rüdeger thus spake she : " If it were known to me
 that he were not an heathen, I would come willingly,
 hitherso'er he listeth, and take him for my lord."
 The margrave answer'd : " Lady, heed not a single word.

1262.

He hath so many warriors, who in Christ's faith believe
 that with the king at no time shall you have cause to grieve.
 What if your faith should win him to take the Christian life?
 Then might you well be happy to be King Etzel's wife."

1263.

Then said her brothers also : " Now, sister mine, say ' Yes,'
 And so be quit for ever of your unhappiness."
 Thus long did they beseech her, till, full of sorrow, she
 Before the heroes promised King Etzel's wife to be.

1264.

She said : " You will I follow, a queen right sad of heart,
 And fare with you to Huns' land ; so may we now depart,
 When I the friends have found me to bring me to his land."
 To that, before the heroes, fair Kriemhild gave her hand.

1265.

Then to her said the margrave : " Hast thou a pair of men,
 To them I can add many : it will be easy then
 To bring you with due honour unto Rhine's further side :
 No longer, mid Burgundians, lady, must thou abide.

1266.

" I have five hundred liegemen, and kinsmen too, of whom
 Thou mayst command the service,— or here, or there at home
 To do thy bidding, lady ; and I will do the same,
 Whene'er thou claim'st my promise,— that so I have no shame.

THE LAY OF THE NIBELUNGS

(A.D.)

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1267.
you have ready your horse accoutred;
your counsel you never shall repent;
your maidens whom you will further bring;
shall we meet travelling."

Un
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1268.
from Siegfried's time they had,
wherewith full many a maid
whene'er they thence should fare,
they gave the ladies fair.

The
She
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1269.
they ere had worn before,
they had a goodly store;
had unto them been said
close-lock'd were open laid.

Wi
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1270.
all unto the fifth day:
the stores that in them lay,
Kriemhild herself did go
she fain would wealth bestow.

1271.
gold from Nibelung-land;
divide it with her hand,
the load could nowise bear.
was brought to Hagen's ear.

1272.
Kriemhilda will ne'er to me be kind
she needs must leave behind
unto my foes let go?
with all this gold will do

1273.

'or if she hence should bring it, I'll wager verily
would be in largesse given to stir up hate for me.
They have not e'en the horses to carry it away.
is Hagen's will to keep it, thus unto Kriemhild' say."

1274.

Now when she heard this message, smit to the heart was she.
The word was likewise carried unto the kings all three.
Nain would they have gainsaid it, but as this did no good,
Sir Rüdeger the noble outspake in joyous mood:

1275.

"O, mighty Queen, and noble, why grieve ye for this gold?
When unto you king Etzel such kindliness doth hold,
That when his eyes behold you, he'll give such riches rare
That you can never spend it: that, lady, will I swear."

1276.

To him the queen made answer: "Most noble Rüdeger,
Never had a king's daughter more wealth bequeath'd to her
Than that of which Sir Hagen hath now despoiled me."
Then went her brother Gernot unto the treasury.

1277.

By right the king's key took he and put it in the door:
And gold therefrom withdrew they, that was of Kriemhild's store;
Of marks full thirty thousand or something more they had:
He the guests to take it: and Gunther was right glad.

1278.

From Bechelaren, dame Gotelinda's lord,
My lady Kriemhild yet ownéd all the hoard
It was aforetime when brought from Niblung-land,
Nor the queen either, would touch it with our hand.

1285.

Then led they forth the palfreys, for it was time to go.
Her friends all fell a-weeping, and many tears did flow.
The noble lady Uté and many a maiden fair
Show'd that for dame Kriemhilda their hearts were full of care.

1286.

A hundred highborn maidens along with her she led,
Who as their rank befitted were all apparelléd.
Then from their eyes bright-shining did many a tear-drop well.
And yet with Etzel later much pleasure them befell.

1287.

Lord Giselher came also and Gernot none the less,
With many of their household, as bade their courtliness.
They would their well-loved sister upon her journey bring.
They led a thousand warriors, a goodly following.

1288.

The ever-ready Gere, and Ortwein also came ;
Rumold the kitchen-master he too must come with them.
Night-quarters made they ready hard by the Danube side.
But Gunther from the city did but a small space ride.

1289.

Ere from the Rhine they journey'd they had before them sent
Their messengers, who swiftly unto the Huns' land went,
And told the king beforehand how Rüdiger had done,
And as a wife for Etzel the noble queen had won.

ADVENTURE VII.—HOW KRIEMHILDA WENT TO THE HUNS.

1200.

Leave we the hero's naming we must make known to you
How the Queen's journey prospered, as she the land rode through;
And where from her the German and Giselher depart.
Right they said and never nay, as taught of faithful heart.

1201.

They rode as far as Pfersing upon the Danube-strand,
Then of the Queen began the suit and quitance to demand,
Since homeward they returning near the Rhine would ride:
Not might the woman weeping vex her loving friends betide.

1202.

Then Giselher the knight thus the Queen said:
"I ever shall be true to you, as need of aid,
I will be true to you as long as I am free to do;
To Duke's hand it shall be I willingly will go."

1203.

Thus she was as the Queen said, as the Queen said she said;
And at the hand of Giselher as the Queen said she said;
The day the Queen was riding as the Queen said she said;
And many a weeping woman as the Queen said she said.

1204.

Thus she was as the Queen said, as the Queen said she said;
And at the hand of Giselher as the Queen said she said;
The day the Queen was riding as the Queen said she said;
And many a weeping woman as the Queen said she said.

1295.

hence rode they swiftly forward down through Bavarian land.
 The people told the tidings of how a mickle band
 Of unknown guests were coming, nigh where a cloister still
 Doth stand, and where Inn river the Danube's flood doth fill.

1296.

Within the town of Passau there was a bishop's see.
 The hostels and the palace stood empty presently:
 To meet the guests men hied them on to Bavarian ground,
 Where Pilgerin the bishop the fair Kriemhilda found.

1297.

The warriors of the country no whit displeaséd were
 To see behind her coming so many ladies fair,
 Their eyes upon these daughters of noble knights did rest.
 Good lodging was provided for every noble guest.

1298.

The bishop into Passau, his niece beside him, rode ;
 And when among the burghers the news was noised abroad
 That coming was Kriemhilda, their prince's sister's child,
 Right gladly was she welcomed by all the merchant guild.

1299.

That they were come to sojourn the bishop fain had known,
 But Eckewart said to him : " It is not to be done ;
 To Rûdeger's dominions we needs must journey down,
 Where many knights await us : as is to all well-known."

1300.

The tidings of their coming now fair Gotlinda knew.
 Straightway she made her ready, her noble daughter too.
 For Rûdeger had warn'd her that he would deem it good
 If when the queen was coming— to somewhat cheer her mood—

she would take with her the best of her men,
 Unto the great hall, where the king was then;
 On every side the hall was full of men,
 With the king and his knights, and the king's men.

Now was the king's heart full of sorrow,
 For he saw the king's men were all away;
 To the great hall he came, and he saw the king,
 Migh to the king's heart full of sorrow.

But well the king's heart was full of sorrow,
 For he saw the king's men were all away;
 There also the king's heart was full of sorrow,
 And many a knight's heart was full of sorrow.

When the king's heart was full of sorrow,
 For he saw the king's men were all away;
 There also the king's heart was full of sorrow,
 And many a knight's heart was full of sorrow.

When the king's heart was full of sorrow,
 For he saw the king's men were all away;
 There also the king's heart was full of sorrow,
 And many a knight's heart was full of sorrow.

When the king's heart was full of sorrow,
 For he saw the king's men were all away;
 There also the king's heart was full of sorrow,
 And many a knight's heart was full of sorrow.

1307.

Rüdeger's retainers unto the guests came nigh,
 nigh many were the lance-shafts one saw raised up on high,
 warriors' hands uplifted, as is the knightly mode ;
 and then before the ladies praiseworthy they rode.

1308.

his brought they to an ending ; then many of the men
 greeted each other kindly. The fair Gotlinda then
 where she saw Kriemhilda they brought upon her way.
 they who could serve the ladies had little rest that day.

1309.

the lord of Bechelaren up to his wife did ride ;
 the noble lady-margrave was right well satisfied
 that he from the Rhine country all safe and sound had won.
 and somewhat was her sorrow in happiness undone.

1310.

then she had made him welcome, he bade her on the green
 amount, with all the ladies who in her train were seen.
 then many a noble liegeman was busy as could be ;
 and service to the ladies was done right readily.

1311.

ly Kriemhild the margravine espied,
 her attendants, she would no nearer ride ;
 in her palfrey at once began to stay,
 from the saddle to lift her down straightway.

1312.

daughter leading one saw the bishop soon,
 wart, to make her unto Gotlinda known ;
 people made wide the way for this.
 nger did Gotelinda kiss.

1313-

Then make a loving fashion the wife of Rüdiger:
 "Give well a me, dear lady, and I my presence fair
 Within my country's borders and with mine eyes have seen.
 To me could at this season no greater joy have been."

1314-

"Most noble Götelinda, God give you your reward!
 It hapn'd I," spake Kriemhild, and Götting's son be spared,
 One day you may be joyful that you have seen my face."
 The both were all unknowing of what must come to pass.

1315-

The messengers exchanging with many maidens fair:
 The warriors ready were upon the clover down,
 who were all then unknown.

1316-

And now 'twas full midday,
 no longer there delay.
 The king and many some
 were all there good.

1317-

The king and many some
 were all there good.

1318-

The king and many some
 were all there good.

1319-

The king and many some
 were all there good.

And the
 Rode in
 They
 No

1319.

Then Rüdeger's fair daughter with all her company,
 Unto the queen approaching, received her lovingly.
 There likewise was her mother, the wife of the margrave.
 To many a young damsel they kindly greeting gave.

1320.

Hands took they with each other, and so together went
 Unto a wide-room'd palace of fashion excellent,
 For there, beneath it rushing, one saw the Danube's flood.
 They sat and took the breezes, and had much pastime good.

1321.

Of what they did there further I cannot say a word.
 That so much time was wasted complaints, howe'er, were heard,—
 Made by Kriemhilda's warriors, whose patience thus was tried.
 But with them, from Bechlaren what goodly thanes did ride!

1322.

By Rüdeger kind service was amply offeréd.
 The queen bestow'd, when leaving, twelve golden bracelets red
 On Gotelinda's daughter, and raiment, too, well-wrought :
 To Etzel's country herself no better brought.

1323.

When they had despoil'd her of all the Niblung gold,
 Of all who saw her she knew to win and hold
 What small wealth remaining she for her use might have.
 To her host's house-servants great store of gifts she gave.

1324.

Like hostess on her side the lady Gotelind
 Unto the Rhineland; to whom she was so kind
 That scarce any among the strangers there
 Her jewels or raiment fine to wear.

1325.

When they enough had eaten, and time it was to start,
The mistress of the household proffer'd, with all her heart,
Most true and loyal service to Etzel's wife to-be.
Then was the fair young maiden embraced right lovingly.

1326.

Unto the Queen thus spake she: "If it seem good to you,
I know that my dear father right gladly this will do:
He'll send me into Hunsland that I with you may be."
That she was loyal-hearted Kriemhilda well could see.

1327.

In front of Bechelaren the horses had been led;
The noble queen already her parting words had said
Unto the wife and daughter of margrave Rüdiger;
With greetings, too, departed full many a maiden fair.

1328.

They scarce from that day forward saw one another more.
And when they came to Medlick, lo! in their hands men bore
A store of brave gold flagons, wherein, unto the street,
Wine brought they for the strangers; to give them welcome more.

1329.

There was a lord of manor here dwelling, hight Astold;
Into the Austrian country the way to them he told:
By Mautern, somewhat further the Danube stream adown.
There right true service later the mighty queen did own.

1330.

Unto his niece the bishop a loving farewell bade;
To be of cheerful spirit her earnestly he pray'd,
And win herself such honour as Helka erst had done.
Ay! what great honour later amongst the Huns she won!

1331.

to the Traisen river the guests they soon did bring ;
 Rüdeger's retainers served them, unwearying,
 till the Hun-folk riding across the country came.
 then was there mickle honour done to the royal dame.

1332.

The king of the Huns' country did, near the Traisen, own
 a very noble stronghold, to everyone well known.
 Its name was Traisenmauer, where Helka lived of yore,
 and practised such great virtues, scarce met with any more,

1333.

She gave only in Kriemhilda ;— for she knew how to give ;—
 and, after all her sorrow, was for some joy to live,
 so that she also honour of Etzel's folk might have ;
 which soon, in fullest measure, the heroes to her gave.

1334.

The sovereignty of Etzel was own'd so far and wide
 That at his court were met with, at every time and tide,
 The bravest of all warriors whose names were known to fame
 Amongst Christians or heathens : all thither to him came.

1335.

With her at all times— which scarce again can come—
 The Christian confession along with heathendom.
 Each living each for himself might have,
 and it was so easy, plenty to all he gave.

ADVENTURE XXII.—HOW ETZEL ESPOUSED
KRIEMHILDA.

1336.

Until the fourth day dawning at Traisenmauer she stay'd.
The dust upon the roadways meanwhile was never laid ;
It rose, as from some burning, on every side, like smoke,
While through the Austrian country came riding Etzel's folk.

1337.

Meanwhile to the king also the news was duly brought ;
Whereon his former sorrow soon vanish'd at the thought
How royally Kriemhilda across the land did ride.
The king then made him ready to go and meet his bride.

1338.

Strange tongues of many ~~raies~~ ^{raies} one heard upon that road,
As many gallant warriors in front of Etzel rode ;
Of Christians and of pagans a host exceeding great ;
And when they met the Lady they went in noble state.

1339.

Of Russ and Greek came riding a goodly company,
And Poles and Wallachs saw one go rushing swiftly by
Upon their gallant chargers, that mightfully they rode ;
And nothing was there lacking of native use and mode.

1340.

From out of the Kief country rode many a warrior bold ;
And hordes from wild Petschnegen. These did the custom hold
Of carrying bow and arrow to shoot birds as they flew ;
With strength they pull'd the bow-string, and the full shaft's length
drew.

1341.

There stood upon the Danube, in Austrian land, a town
The name whereof was Tulna : to her was there made known
Full many a foreign custom she had not seen before.
By many was she welcomed, who through her suffer'd sore.

1342.

As guard before King Etzel a company there rode
Of mighty men and merry, courtly and high of mood ;
Of princes four-and-twenty, all great and wealthy men.
They came to see their Lady,— naught more they ask'd for then.

1343.

There also was Duke Ramung, from the Wallachian plain,
Who with seven hundred horsemen before her sped amain :
Like birds of passage flying, one saw them whirling by.
Prince Gibeche soon follow'd, with stately chivalry.

1344.

Hornboge, the eye ready, came with a thousand men,
And from the king's side turn'd him towards his Lady then.
As was their country's custom, they raised a mighty shout.
And all the Hunnish kinsmen in swarms came riding out.

1345.

Also there came from Denmark Haward the valiant one,
And ever-ready Iring, to falseness all unknown ;
And Irnfried of Thuringia, a goodly man was he !
So welcomed they Kriemhilda, she needs must honour'd be.

1346.

With their twelve hundred liegemen the host they rode before.
Sir Bloedelin came also with thrice a thousand more—
The brother of King Etzel from out of Hungary :
Right royally escorted unto the queen rode he.

1347.

And last of all King Etzel; and with him Dietrich came
With all his chosen comrades and many a knight of fame,
Right noble and praiseworthy, and valiant and good.
Whereat was dame Kriemhilda much lightsomer of mood.

1348.

Then, to the princess speaking, the nobler Rüdeger
Said: "Lady, I will welcome the mighty sovrän here.
And whomsoe'er I bid you to kiss, so do it then:
You must not give like greeting to all of Etzel's men."

1349.

Then down from off her palfrey the high-born queen they took;
Whereon the mighty Etzel no more delay could brook.
He from his steed dismounted with many a bold knight too:
And then one saw him blithely towards Kriemhilda go.

1350.

Two rich and mighty princes, as has to us been told,
Were standing near the lady her garment's train to hold,
What time the royal Etzel went forward her to meet.
The noble prince with kisses then did she kindly greet.

1351.

She raised the veil that screen'd her; her dainty colour glow'd
Out of its golden setting; and many a knight avow'd
That ne'er could Lady Helka have shown a face more fair.
King Etzel's brother, Bloedelin, was standing very near.

1352.

Him Rüdeger the margrave bade her to kiss; and eke
King Gibeche; and Dietrich, who was not far to seek.
A dozen of the warriors were kiss'd by Etzel's bride;
Then gave she other greeting to many a knight beside.

1353.

Now all the while that Etzel did by Kriemhilda stay
The younger men were busy (as such would be to-day)
With many mighty tiltings; one saw then how they rode;
Both Christian knights and heathen, each following their mode.

1354.

How knightly was the bearing of Dietrich's gallant men!
Their javelins and lances went flying forth amain
High over shields and bucklers, by good knights' hands address'd.
Then shiver'd were the shield-rims of many a German guest.

1355.

Then was a mighty crashing of breaking lance and spear.
The warriors of the country were all assembled there,
As were the king's guests also,— a throng of noble men:
The mighty king was walking with dame Kriemhilda then.

1356.

They saw hard by them standing a very noble tent;
The plain around was cover'd by many a wooden pent,
Where folk might sit and rest them when work was duly sped;
And many beauteous maidens by heroes there were led

1357.

Unto their royal mistress, as she was sitting there
Upon the rich chair covers. The margrave right good care
Had taken, so to fit it, that everyone should find
Kriemhilda's bower delightful: and glad was Etzel's mind.

1358.

What Etzel spake unto her it is not mine to say.
Meanwhile her small white fingers within his right hand lay.
In loving fashion sat they, for knightly Rüdiger
Would have no secret wooing betwixt the king and her.

1359.

Straightway commands were given that all the games be stayt
With honour they were ended and all the din allay'd.
Into the wooden houses the men of Etzel hied ;
And folk provided lodging around for far and wide.

1360.

The day had reached its ending : they laid them down to sleep
Until the light of morning again began to peep.
Then were the steeds bestridden once more, by many a man :
Ha, and in Etzel's honour what pastimes then began !

1361.

The king enjoin'd his Hunsmen to do all honour bade.
Unto Vienna city their way from Tüln they made ;
There, deck'd in fine apparel, full many a dame they found ;
King Etzel's wife these welcomed, as in all honour bound.

1362.

In all-sufficing plenty whatever they would have
Was there, already for them. Right many a warrior brave
With joy the sport awaited. All went to hostelry.
And soon the royal wedding began right merrily.

1363.

But not for all could lodgings be found within the town.
To such as were not strangers, did Rüdeger make known
That they must seek out quarters in country places round.
I ween there were at all times near dame Kriemhilda found

1364.

Dietrich, the noble warrior, and many another knight.
These had their slumbers broken by working ere daylight
That nothing should be lacking to cheer the strangers' mood.
So Rüdeger and his comrades had rest and pastime good.

1365.

The marriage was accomplish'd one day in Whitsuntide,
When first the royal Etzel lay by Kriemhilda's side,
Within Vienna's city. So many men, thought she,
At her first husband's bidding, she surely ne'er did see.

1366.

To those who had not seen her she made herself well known
By gifts; yea many among them unto the guests did own:
We deemed that dame Kriemhilda had little goods or gold,—
But here hath she, by giving, wrought marvels manifold."

1367.

The merry-making lasted for days full seventeen.
And never was there told of another king, I ween,
Whose wedding was more noble: such is to us unknown.
All folk who there were present did new apparel own.

1368.

In Netherland, aforetime, thought she, she ne'er had sat
With such a throng of warriors. I say, moreover, that,
If great was Siegfried's substance, he ne'er had, as his men,
So many noble warriors as stood round Etzel then.

1369.

Nor was there ever any who at his wedding-tide
Of mantles gave so many, so rich and deep and wide;
Nor any such good raiment as here there was to don.
In honour of Kriemhilda was all in this wise done.

1370.

Their friends and eke the strangers were all alike of mind,
That there had been no sparing in gear of any kind.
Whatever any wanted, that presently he had.
Yea many a knight through kindness was wellnigh naked made.

1371.

Yet days of old in Rhineland she could not quite forget,
Beside her noble husband ; and then her eyes grew wet.
She did her best to hide it, lest anyone should see.
After so many a sorrow much honour now had she.

1372.

What others gave in bounty no better was than air
Compared with Dietrich's giving. Whatever Botlung's heir
Had given him for largesse, that quickly lavish'd he.
Eke Rüdeger with bounty was marvellously free.

1373.

And Bloedelin came also, the prince from Hungary,
And bade men take whatever in many chests might be
Of gold and silver pieces : 'twas all to give away.
Then saw one the king's heroes keeping high holiday.

1374.

The players of King Etzel, Wärbel and Swemmelin,
I ween that either of them did at the wedding win
A thousand marks for certain, or maybe even more,
What time the fair Kriemhilda her crown by Etzel wore.

1375.

Upon the eighteenth morning they from Vienna went.
Then was in knightly pastime full many a buckler bent,
By lances that were carried in every warrior's hand.
Soon came the royal Etzel unto the Hunnish land.

1376.

In the old town of Heimburg they rested overnight.
By then the throng of people could no one tell aright,
Nor with what strength of numbers they overspread the ground.
Ay me, and what fair women they in his country found !

1377.

At Miesenburg the wealthy unto the boats they took
 The stream with men and horses was hidden, as to look
 Not otherwise than dry land ; yet ever seem'd to flow.
 The women, travel-weary, had ease and comfort now.

1378.

Together had been fasten'd ships many and right good
 That they might get no damage from either waves or flood.
 And many a well-made awning thereover did they strain,
 As if they still beneath them had land and open plain.

1379.

At Etzelburg, before them, arrived these tidings then
 Whereat was great rejoicing of women and of men.
 The ladies of Queen Helka, who erewhile were her care,
 Soon many days and happy did with Kriemhilde share.

1380.

There stood and waited for her full many a noble maid
 On whom abundant sorrow since Helka's death had weigh'd
 The daughters of kings seven still there Kriemhilde found
 Who were the pride and glory of Etzel's land around.

1381.

The maiden lady Herrat, still of them all had care
 Queen Helka's sister's daughter, of many virtues rare
 The bride betroth'd of Dietrich, child of a king of fame
 The daughter, too, of Nentwein : to honour great was name.

1382.

Unto the guests' arrival she look'd with woe and sigh
 Whereto great stores and treasure were also ready nigh
 How later the king feasted— who could it all beare?
 And with a queen at no time did Hunsen better fare.

1383.

As with his wife beside him the king rode from the strand,
The noble dame Kriemhilda was given to understand
The name of every lady, the better them to greet.
Ay, mightily she bore her sitting in Helka's seat.

1384.

To her was faithful service render'd right readily.
Wherefore the queen divided her gold and jewelry,
Her silver and apparel : whate'er she did convey
From over Rhine to Hunsland must all be given away.

1385.

Also with suit and service subject to her, from then,
Were all of the king's kinsmen, and likewise all his men.
Never had Lady Helka enjoy'd such potent sway ;
So must they serve Kriemhilda until her dying day.

1386.

Then stood so high in honour the court and realm around,
That men came there at all times, and chosen pastime found,—
To whatsoe'er it might be that each one's heart did lean,—
Be it the king's good favour or bounty of the queen.

ADVENTURE XXIII.—HOW KRIEMHILDA THOUGHT TO AVENGE HER INJURY.

1387.

In great estate of honour, as truly doth appear,
They dwelt with one another until the seventh year.
During this time the king's wife brought forth a son and heir;
Whereat the royal Etzel could ne'er be happier.

1388.

She would not be persuaded to be content with aught
But that the child of Etzel should to the font be brought,
With Christian rites according. Ortlieb they named the boy:
Which all through Etzel's country was cause of mickle joy.

1389.

Whatever noble virtues in Lady Helka lay,
To match them dame Kriemhilda e'er studied, day by day.
The customs soon were taught her, by Herrat, maid forlorn.
Who with a secret longing for Helka still did mourn.

1390.

To native folk and strangers she now was widely known:
'Twas said of her, that never did any king's land own
A better, milder mistress; right sure of this they were.
Such fame she bore in Hunsland until the thirteenth year.

1391.

Now since she knew for certain that none would her gainsay
E'en as kings' warriors mostly their princes' wives obey,—
And as twelve kings before her were ever seen to come,
She thought on all the sorrows that she had known at home.

1392.

She thought, too, of the honours that once in Niflung land
Had been in her possession; and which by Hagen's hand,
At time of Siegfried's murder, were wholly done away:
And whether he might ever for that be made to pay.

1393.

"It might be, could I bring him by some means to this land."
She dreamt that she was walking, and near her, close at hand,
Was Giselher, her brother, and in her gentle sleep
She kissed him very often. He soon had cause to weep:

1394.

I ween some evil devil Kriemhilda did provoke
That with her brother Gunther her friendship now she broke,
Whom she, in full forgiveness, kiss'd on Burgundian soil.
Then with hot tears began she once more her robe to spoil.

1395.

And ever, late and early, within her heart it wrought
How, without fault on her part, she had thereto been brought,
That henceforth with a heathen she must in wedlock live;
This bitterness did Hagen and Gunther, too, contrive.

1396.

The wish that dwelt within her ne'er let her heart alone;
Thought she: "I am so mighty, and such great riches own,
That on my foes in vengeance some ill I may repay.
Thus would I do right gladly to Hagen of Tronjé.

1397.

"My heart is longing sorely for my dear faithful one:
Might I but get them near me who ill to me have done,
So would I take full vengeance for my beloved's life;—
Scarce can I bide their coming;" so murmur'd Etzel's wife.

1398.

The whole of the king's liegemen held highly in esteem
The warriors of Kriemhilda: and well it was, I deem.
Her treasurer was Eckwart,— good friends thereby he made.
Nor could Kriemhilda's wishes by any be gainsaid.

1399.

Now was she ever thinking: "I will beseech the king!"
To wit, that of his goodness he would allow this thing,
That unto the Hun-country her kinsmen might be brought.
But no one there discover'd the queen's unholy thought.

1400.

[It came to pass one night-time, as by the king she lay,
His arms were cast about her, as was his wont alway,
Loving the noble lady: for she was as his life)
That of her foes was thinking the fair and noble wife.

1401.

And to the king thus spake she: "My ever dear good lord,
I fain would ask a favour, if thou wouldst such accord:
If I am worthy of it, that thou shouldst let me see
Whether my friends and kinsmen thou lovest verily."

1402.

Then spake the mighty sovran, and guileless was his mood:
"I would have thee believe that, if any grace or good
Be done unto those warriors, I must thereat be glad,
Since I by love of woman ne'er better friends have made."

1403.

And yet again the queen spake: "To thee it hath been said,
That I have high-born kinsmen; and this my grief hath made
That they have never troubled to come to see me here.
I hear the people call me naught else but foreigner."

1404.

Whereunto answer'd Etzel: "Belovéd lady mine,
If not too far it seemeth, so will I from the Rhine
Bid all unto my kingdom whom thou art fain to see."
When thus she learnt his purpose right glad at heart was she.

1405.

She said: "If thou right truly wouldst serve me, master mine,
So wilt thou send an envoy to Worms beyond the Rhine.
That I may tell my kinsfolk all that I have in mind.
Then many a knight right noble his way to us shall find."

1406.

"Whenever thou commandest," said he, "it shall be done.
Thou canst not be so eager thy friends to look upon
As I of noble Uté the sons to see am fain ;
That we are still such strangers hath caused me mickle pain.

1407.

"And if it should content thee, belovéd lady mine,
So will I send right gladly, unto those friends of thine,
My players on the fiddle to the Burgundian land."
To bring the worthy fiddlers straightway he gave command.

1408.

They hasten'd very quickly to where King Etzel sat.
And eke the queen beside him. He told them both, how that
As envoys they were chosen to Burgundy to fare.
For them he bade his people rich raiment to prepare.

1409.

For four-and-twenty warriors was new apparel made ;
And by the king their errand was also to them said :
How Gunther and his people to bring there they should seek.
But fain was Lady Kriemhild apart with them to speak.

1410.

Then said the king most mighty : "Now hark ye what to do !
All that is good and kindly I bid my friends, by you ;
If they vouchsafe to journey unto my kingdom here.
Ne'er yet have I had knowledge of guests as these so dear.

1411.

"And if they so be minded my will herein to do,
These kinsmen of Kriemhilda, then must they not forego
To come to us this summer, to keep my wedding-feast ;
For much on my wife's kindred my happiness doth rest."

[XXIII.] HOW KRIEMHILDA THOUGHT TO AVENGE HER. 241

1412-

Then spake the fiddle-player, the haughty Schwenmeller :
"When will in this your kingdom your wedding-feast begin ?
That we to your friends yonder unerringly may say."
Then answer made King Etzel : "On next Midsummer-day."

1413-

"We'll do as thou dost bid us," made answer Werbelin.
Then gave the queen an order that they be brought within
Her private room in secret, to speak with her alone.
Whereof soon many a warrior but sorry comfort won.

1414-

To both the envoys spake she : "Well shall it be for you
If you my will and purpose right faithfully shall do,
And say whate'er I bid you when to my home you go ;
In goods I'll make you wealthy, and raiment rich bestow.

1415-

"What friends of mine soever ye see and meet with there
At Worms on the Rhine river, take heed lest ye declare
That ye have ever seen me in melancholy mood :
And bear my greeting unto those heroes bold and good.

1416.

"To what the king requireth beg them that they agree,
And thereby let them make me from all my trouble free.
The Huns may well believe that I have no friends at all.
Were I a knight, I'd ever be ready at their call.

1417.

"And to my noble brother, to Gernot eke say ye
That in the world is no one I hold more lovingly :
Our best of friends and kinsmen bid him unto this land
To bring, that so the better we may in honour stand

1418.

"To Giselher say also that he must not forget
That never have I suffer'd by fault of his as yet :
Wherefore would I right gladly set eyes on him again ;
And, for the faith he show'd me, to see him here am fain.

1419.

"And also tell my mother what honours now I bear.
If Hagen, too, of Tronjé shall still be dwelling there
By whom shall they more fitly be through the country shown?
To him the roads to Hunsland from childhood have been known."

1420.

Unknowing were the envoys what meaning therein lay,
That Hagen, knight of Tronjé, on no account should stay
Behind the rest in Rhineland. Soon woe for them it made :
With him was many a warrior to cruel death betray'd.

1421.

With message and with letters they were provided now :
To live henceforth in plenty of wealth they had enow.
Their leave they took of Etzel and of his lady fair.
And clad in rich apparel a goodly sight they were.

ADVENTURE XXIV.—HOW WERBEL AND SCHWEMMEL DID THEIR ERRAND.

1422.

When Etzel to the Rhineland had sent his embassy,
The news thereof right swiftly from land to land did fly :
He greeting gave and bade them, by messengers right fleet,
To come unto his feasting : whence many death did meet.

1423.

From out the Huns' dominions the envoys swiftly went
To the Burgundian country; for thither were they sent
Three noble kings to summon, and eke their chivalry,
To come and visit Etzel: so rode they speedily.

1424.

First were they on their journey to Bechelaren brought;
The folk there served them gladly. That he might fail in naught
By them unto the Rhineland sent greeting Rüdeger,
As also did Gotlinda and eke their daughter dear.

1425.

Nor did they send them further without a proper meed,
Whereby the men of Etzel made all the better speed.
To Uté and her children sent message Rüdeger,
To say there lived no margrave who meant them kindlier.

1426.

Unto Brunhilda also a kindly greeting went,
Of good faith ever steadfast, and friendliest intent.
When they these words had taken, forth would the envoys fare:
That God in Heaven would keep them, was Gotelinda's prayer.

1427.

Ere yet the envoys fully had cross'd Bavarian ground,
The ever-ready Werbel the worthy bishop found.
What message for his kinsmen upon the Rhine he told
Thereof I have no knowledge; save that in ruddy gold

1428.

He gave the twain a token before he let them ride.
Quoth Pilgerin the bishop: "And could I at my side
See them, so were I happy,— these sister's sons of mine:
Scarce can I come to see them, myself, unto the Rhine."

1429.

The ways by which they travell'd o'er land unto the Rhine,
I cannot say for certain. Silver and raiment fine
By none from them was stolen : men fear'd their lord's despite—
That king of noble lineage— ay, potent was his might !

1430.

In the Burgundian country, to Worms upon the Rhine
Came, after twelve days' riding, Werbel and Schwemmelin.
Unto the king the tidings were told, and to his men,
Of foreign envoys coming. Gunther made question then.

1431.

Quoth he, the Lord of Rhineland : " Who can to us declare
Whence come these foreign riders that through our country fare ?"
But that was known to no one : till Hagen of Tronjé,
As soon as he had seen them, did thus to Gunther say :

1432.

" Strange news to us is coming that much I will aver.
The fiddle-players of Etzel I have but now seen here.
Unto the Rhine your sister hath sent them, verily ;
For sake of both their sovereigns right welcome must they be."

1433.

Meanwhile before the palace in full array they rode ;
No prince's minstrels ever in nobler fashion show'd.
The royal court-folk hasten'd to meet them presently :
They bade men take their mantles and found them hostelry.

1434.

Their travelling clothes were costly, with work so deftly done
That they might well with honour before the king have gone.
Yet in the same apparel to court they would not go :
Who cared for it might have it, the envoys let men know.

I435.

Without delay they met with folk who were well content
To take the clothing gladly; and unto them 'twas sent.
And thereupon the strangers put on far better gear,
As it behoves kings' heralds in full array to wear.

I436.

So went, when leave was given, to where the monarch sat
Those followers of Etzel: and all were glad thereat.
With courtesy did Hagen towards the heralds make,
And gave them kindly greeting, for which their thanks they spake.

I437.

To learn from them the tidings to questioning he fell,
If Etzel and his lieges were faring all right well?
Then answer'd him the minstrel: "Ne'er throve the country more,
Nor were the folk so happy,— of that thou may'st be sure."

I438.

Towards the host then went they. Crowded the palace was;
Unto the guests was offer'd such kindly welcome as
In foreign kings' dominions is ever given of right.
And there, in Gunther's service, found Werbel many a knight.

I439.

And graciously King Gunther began to greet them then:
"Be both of ye right welcome, ye Hunnish minstrelmen,
And your companions also. Ye are, I understand,
Sent hither by great Etzel to the Burgundian land?"

I440.

Before the king they bow'd them, and then spake Werbelin:
"To thee his service offers that well-loved lord of mine;
And to this land thy sister Kriemhilda greeting saith.
They send us to you warriors trusting in your good faith."

1441.

The mighty prince made answer: "Of this right glad am I.
And tell me how is Etzel," so did the king reply.
"And eke my sister Kriemhild, yonder in Hunnish land?"
Then spake the fiddle-player: "I'll answer this demand.

1442.

"Of this ye may be certain, that never yet there were
Two folks who lived together more happy than this pair;
And all the knights around them, their kinsfolk and their men.
When on this ride we started, right joyous were they then."

1443.

"Gramercy for the greeting he hath sent me this day,
And thank my sister also; since it be as ye say,
That all live in contentment, ruler and ruled as well:
For I with some misgiving, ask'd ye the news to tell."

1444.

The king's two younger brothers had likewise come by now:
For they the news from Hunsland but now had got to know.
And Giselher right gladly, for his dear sister's sake,
Set eyes upon the envoys and kindly to them spake.

1445.

"Right welcome must ye heralds be unto me and mine,
And if ye rode more often hither unto the Rhine,
Friends would ye find here always rejoicing ye to see.
That aught should here befall you small peril can there be."

1446.

"We trust you in all honour," made answer Schwemmelin.
"And never can I tell you by any wit of mine,
How Etzel hath enjoin'd us to greet you lovingly,
As hath your noble sister, who there hath honour high.

1447.

"Of former faith and kindness the queen doth you remind,
And how with heart and body you aye to her inclined.
But to the king's self firstly have we been sent, to pray
That into Etzel's country ye deign to take your way.

1448.

"That we thereto should urge ye hath given strict command
The rich and mighty Etzel, who likewise doth demand
That if ye by your sister would not again be seen,
Then would he fain have knowledge of what his fault hath been.

1449.

"That ye are strangers to him, and to his country, too ;
For if the Queen Kriemhilda were all unknown to you,
Still he himself were worthy for you to care to see.
And were this thing to happen, 'twould please him verily."

1450.

Then spake the royal Gunther : "A week from now being gone,
So will I give you tidings of what conclusion
My friends and I have come to. Meanwhile for you 'twere best
To go unto your hostel, and may ye have good rest."

1451.

But Werbelin spake further : "If such a thing might be,
Fain would we have permission my lady first to see—
I mean the mighty Uté,— before our rest we seek.
Then Giselher the noble in courtly wise did speak :

1452.

"That no man shall deny you ; and if to her ye go,
Ye will my mother's pleasure right well accomplish so :
For gladly will she see ye ; and for my sister's sake,
The Lady Kriemhild namely, you welcome will she make.

1453.

So Giselper he brought them to where they found the dame.
With joy she saw the heralds who from the Huns' land came;
And heartily did greet them, so kindly was her mood.
Then told they her the tidings those courtly heralds good.

1454.

Spake Schwemmelin in this wise: "My lady sends to thee
Her faithful love and duty; and if it so might be
That she could see you often, she bids you to believe
That in this world would nothing more gladness to her give."

1455.

Whereto the queen made answer: "Alas, it may not be!
Often as I am longing my daughter dear to see,
Too distant dwelleth from me your noble monarch's wife.
May she and Etzel ever be blessed in their life.

1456.

"But ye must give me warning, ere from this place ye fare,
When ye will be returning; for heralds saw I ne'er
For long days past so gladly, as I have look'd on you."
The squires then gave their promise her will therein to do.

1457.

And so unto their hostel the men from Hunsland went.
Meanwhile for friends and kinsmen the mighty king had sent.
The noble Gunther question put unto every man
What thought he of the matter. And many then began

1458.

To say that he might fairly ride unto Etzel's land.
So counsell'd him the warriors who did around him stand,
Excepting only Hagen,— to whom 'twas bitter woe.
He told the king in secret: "Thou wilt thyself undo.

1151.

'Thou know'st as well as I do what thing we wished : yet
Needs must we of Kriemhilde be taken possession
Seeing I slew her husband, and that with mine own hand
How durst we take this journey and ride to Burgundy land ?'

1152.

Then spake the mighty Gunther : ' My sister when we came
Pardon to us she granted, ere from this land we went
With kisses of forgiveness, in what to her was sent
Unless, it may be, Hagen, that these she takes hence.'

1153.

'Be not deceived,' said Hagen, ' words of the messenger be
The envoys bring from Hunsland : Vengeance Kriemhilde be
Be well prepared to suffer your honour and your life
Long-waiting in her vengeance is she King Gunther's wife.'

1154.

Thereon the princely Gerret with the council said
'Because that thou wilt reason, to have thy life that stand
Within the Huns' dominions, must we then avise
This plan to see our sister? right it would that devise.'

1155.

Prince Giselher then also spake thus with the knight
'Since thou, friend Hagen, knowest that at the play we
So stay thou here in safety and of thyself take care
And let, with us, the bold ones, and my sister fare.'

1156.

With wrath began to kindle the warrior of Torgé.
'I will not have another go with you on your way.
Who dares than I more boldly on this count-side to go
Since ye will not be hinder'd, that will I let you know.'

1465.

Then spake the kitchen-master, Rumold the worthy thane:
"Here friends and strangers can ye right easily maintain
As ye yourselves are willing: your stores are full, I trow;
And ne'er, I ween, hath Hagen betray'd you hitherto.

1466.

"If ye will heed not Hagen, Rumold now counsels you—
And I have ever served you with love and service true—
That here ye fain should tarry, out of good will to me,
And let King Etzel yonder along with Kriemhild be.

1467.

"How otherwise in this world could ye e'er better live?
In spite of all your foemen here may you right well thrive;
You may your bodies freely with raiment rich endue,
And wine drink of the choicest, and winsome maidens woo.

1468.

"Meats, too, are set before ye,— the best that e'er were brought
To any king in this world; and if this all were naught,
You should, methinks, remain here for sake of your fair wife,—
Ere in such childish fashion you seek to risk your life.

1469.

"I counsel your abiding: rich is your heritage.
At home can vassals better to you redeem their pledge
Than yonder 'mid the Hun-folk. Who knows how things be
there?
My lords, go ye not thither: thus Rumold doth declare!"

1470.

Thereunto answer'd Gernot: "Here will we tarry not,
Since we such friendly bidding have from my sister got,
And from the mighty Etzel. Why put the thing aside?
Who goes not gladly with us may e'en at home abide."

1471.

And thereto answer'd Hagen : " See lest ye take amiss
The words that I have spoken, howe'er ye do in this.
I give you faithful counsel : as ye regard your life,
Go well-arm'd to the Hun-folk, as if for battle-strife.

1472.

" Will ye not be dissuaded, so send ye for your men,
The best that ye can muster or any way can gain ;
And from them all I'll choose ye a thousand warriors good :
So may ye fear no evil from angry Kriemhild's mood."

1473.

" That rede I'll gladly follow," the king in answer said.
Then sent he heralds riding, who through his kingdom sped.
And so they brought the warriors, three thousand men or more.
They dreamt not of the evil that lay for them in store.

1474.

All through the lands of Gunther right joyously they rode.
On every man a charger and raiment were bestow'd—
Of those who were to journey away from Burgundy.
A goodly number follow'd the king right willingly.

1475.

Then Hagen, lord of Tronjé, his brother Dankwart bade
The four score knights who served them unto the Rhine to lead.
They came in knightly order ; with arms and wearing gear
Within King Gunther's borders right soon did they appear.

1476.

Now came the gallant Volker,— a high-born minstrel he,—
To join with thirty liegemen the royal company.
Such splendid raiment had they, a king had worn it well.
That he would ride to Hunsland, to Gunther bade he tell.

1477.

Now who was this same Volker I fain would let you know:
He was of noble lineage; to him did fealty owe
In the Burgundian country, full many a noble knight.
Because he play'd the fiddle he was the Minstrel hight.

1478.

Then Hagen chose the thousand: they were to him well-known
And what in hard-fought battles their strength of hand had done
And all they e'er had ventured, that had he seen full well.
No man of aught save valour in all their deeds could tell.

1479.

The envoys of Kriemhilda were sore discomfited,
For they of both their rulers the wrath began to dread;
And leave they daily sought for, that they might thence begone
But Hagen would not grant it: through cunning that was done.

1480.

He said unto his masters: "We must be on our guard
Lest we to go allow them, before we are prepared
Within a week thereafter to Etzel's land to go.
If any ill-will bear us, thus shall we better know.

1481.

"So shall not Dame Kriemhilda be taking heed hereto,
That any, by her counsel, should evil to us do.
And if it be her purpose her own may be the pain:
With us to Hunsland take we so many chosen men."

1482.

Their bucklers, then, and saddles, and all of such like gear
As they to Etzel's country had in their minds to bear,
By many valiant liegemen for use were ready made.
The envoys of Kriemhilda were unto Gunther bade.

1483.

And when the heralds enter'd, unto them Gernot said :
 The king will take the offer to us by Etzel made ;
 And we will come right gladly unto his festival,
 And see again our sister : of that doubt not at all."

1484.

Then spake to them King Gunther : " Can ye not tell us, pray,
 When is this merry-making ? or rather, on what day
 Twere best that we come thither ? " 'Twas Schwemmelin replied :
 ' Ye must be there for certain at next Midsummer-tide."

1485.

The king unto them granted, if haply they were will'd
 (For not yet had they done it) to see the Dame Brunhild,
 That they with his approval might to her presence go.
 It was gainsaid by Volker : for her sake did he so.

1486.

" In sooth the Lady Brunhild is not now in the mood
 For you to look upon her," so spake the warrior good.
 " Wait ye until to-morrow, then her they'll let you see."
 So hoped they to behold her ; but it was not to be.

1487.

The mighty prince then order'd (he held those envoys dear
 Out of his own great kindness, that folk should thither bear
 His gold upon broad bucklers ; great store thereof he had
 And by his kinsmen also rich gifts to them were made

1488.

For Giselher and Gernot, Gere and Orwein too,
 That they were kindly-hearted right plainly then did shew
 They such abundant largess unto the envoys gave,
 That, fearful of their rulers, none of it would they have.

1489.

Then Werbelin the herald unto the king did say :
" Your gifts, Lord King, so please ye, let in your kingdom stay
We may not take them with us ; my lord bade us take heed,
Lest gifts by us be taken : nor is there any need."

1490.

Then did the Lord of Rhineland this thing unkindly take,
That they a great king's treasure of small account should make,
So were they bound to take it, his gold and habiting,
And unto Etzel's country were fain with them to bring.

1491.

They would see Uté also ere they set forth again.
So Giselher the ready brought both the minstrelmen
Unto his mother Uté. This word the lady sent :
'That if Kriemhild were honour'd her mother was content.

1492.

Then bade the queen be given of gold and broidery,
All for the sake of Kriemhild,— so dear to her was she,—
And for the sake of Etzel, unto the minstrels both.
They readily might take it : 'twas done in honest troth.

1493.

'The messengers' leave-taking was done ; and now they had
Parted from men and maidens ; and so with hearts right glad
They rode on into Swabia ; thus far 'twas Gernot's will
His heroes should escort them, that none might do them ill.

1494.

When they, who thus did guard them, parted and homewards rode,
In Etzel's power a safeguard they found on ev'ry road,
Whence none essay'd to rob them of horse or wearing gear.
And so to Etzel's country they speedily drew near.

1415.

Where'er they found acquaintance in many a town and hall
How the Burgundian people are many now with all
Unto the Hun-folk's country were coming from the North
The news was carried also to Bishop Pilgram.

1416.

As they by Bechelaren along the highway went
To Rüdiger folk told it, — as might well be expected —
And also to Gotlinda, the margrave's daughter,
That she was soon to see them was joy and gladness.

1417.

Folk saw how with the things the margrave's army went
Until they found King Engel at home where he was wont
And greeting upon greeting which many a word was
They to the king delivered tidings with all the word.

1418.

And when the queen the things did know understand
That verily her brothers were coming to the land
In mood she was right happy: and soon the king's command
With costly gifts rewarded: and honour had the land.

1419.

"Now Schwemmelin and Werbel each one of you," said she,
"Tell me which of my kinsmen will at our bidding be
Of whom the best and dearest meet our need we take."
And, when the news was told them, said the young Pilgram:

1420.

They said: "One morning early he came to the queen,
And not a good word from him we early had or seen.
And when the ride to Hunsland was praised by all the folk
Grim Hagen looked not otherwise than if of death they spoke."

1501.

"Your brothers here are coming, the noble kings all three,
In high and lordly humour. But who with them may be
That news I cannot give you, seeing I do not know ;
But Volker the bold minstrel hath vow'd with them to go."

1502.

"Him could I spare right blithely," in answer spake the queen ;
"Since many a time and often here Volker have I seen.
But fain I am of Hagen, the hero excellent ;
That here we soon shall see him doth give me much content."

1503.

Then went the royal lady where she the king did find ;
How gently Dame Kriemhilda unto him spake her mind !
"How do the tidings please thee, my lord beloved," she said,
"Now all my heart hath yearned for shall be accomplished."

1504.

"Thy will is eke my pleasure," thus did the king reply,
"Nor any of my kindred so glad to see were I,
If e'er they should be coming hither unto my land.
For sake of them that love thee is all my trouble bann'd."

1505.

King's officers then straightway commandment gave to all
That seats should be made ready in palace and in hall,
Meet for the guests beloved who would be there anon.
By them, ere long, for Etzel was pleasure all fordone.

DVENTURE XXV.—HOW THE LORDS ALL WENT
TO THE HUNS.

1506.

Now let us leave the story of how they prosper'd there,
re then did never warriors of higher courage fare
In such like state and splendour through any king's domain.
Of armour and apparel all had as they were fain.

1507.

He warden of the Rhineland equipp'd his warriors bold,
A thousand knights and sixty, so is the story told,
With men-at-arms nine thousand for this great festival.
They whom they left behind them ere long bewail'd them all.

1508.

Their riding gear they carried to Worms across the court.
Whereon an aged bishop of Spires spake in this sort
Unto the comely Uté: "Our friends have mind to fare
Unto this high assembly: God guard their honour there!"

1509.

Whereon unto her children did noble Uté say:
Ye should, my noble heroes, be here content to stay:
I dreamt a dream this morning, of great dismay and dread;
How all the winged creatures within this land were dead."

1510.

Who puts his faith in dreamings," then Hagen made reply,
Knows not the proper meaning that may within them lie,
Then honour, peradventure, may wholly be at stake.
I'm willing that my masters for court their leave

1511.

"We should indeed with gladness ride unto Etzel's land :
There kings can have the service of many a hero's hand,
When there we take our part in Kriemhilda's revelry."
Hagen the journey counsell'd : he rued it presently.

1512.

He would have been against it, if Gernot had not sought
With ill-advised speeches to set him so at naught :
Reminding him of Siegfried, the Lady Kriemhild's lord ;
Said he : " This ride to Hagen is therefore untoward."

1513.

Then Hagen spake, of Tronjé : " Through fear I'll not forego !
If such your will is, heroes, 'twere well to buckle to.
Gladly will I ride with you, e'en unto Etzel's realm."
Soon by his hand were shatter'd full many a shield and helm.

1514.

The boats were ready waiting, and many a man was there :
Whate'er they had of clothing on board forthwith they bare.
Unwearyingly wrought they until the fall of eve ;
And full of joy and gladness at length their homes they leave.

1515.

Their tents and wooden cabins were pitch'd upon the green
Along the further Rhine-bank. When finish'd this had been,
The king's fair wife besought him a while there to abide
For one night would she lay her his manly form beside.

1516.

With trumpeting and fluting the early morning brake,
To warn them to be starting : then did they ready make,
If any had a sweetheart her to his heart he laid ;—
For them a bitter parting King Etzel's wife soon made !

1517.

The sons of the fair Uté for vassal had a man
As bold as he was faithful ; now, when the march began,
He to the king, in secret, did thus his mind declare.
Said he : " It needs must grieve me that to this feast ye fare."

1518.

This man by name was Rumold, a knight of ready hand.
" To whom," so spake he, " leave ye your people and your land ?
Alas, that none can turn you, ye warriors, from your mood !
This message of Kriemhilda's to me ne'er boded good."

1519.

" To thee my realm be trusted, and eke my little son,
Serve faithfully the ladies ; so let my will be done.
Shouldst thou see any mourner, 'tis thine to cheer his life.
No harm will e'er befall us by cause of Etzel's wife."

1520.

The horses were awaiting the kings and eke their men ;
With loving kiss departed full many a husband then,
Whose heart was full of courage, and body strong with life :
Soon to be sadly wept for by many a comely wife.

1521.

Who saw the eager warriors unto their horses go,
Saw likewise many a lady there standing in her woe.
That they for long were parting too surely did they feel,
Foreboding great disaster. Heart never thus had weal.

1522.

Now quickly the Burgundians did on their journey ride.
Then was there much disturbance through all the country wide ;
On either side the mountains both women wept and m^o
Howe'er their people bare it forth fared they

1523.

The warriors of Niblung to ride with them had come,
A thousand men in hauberks, who left behind at home
Full many a lovely lady, ne'er to be seen again.
Still wrought the wounds of Siegfried in Kriemhild bitter pain.

1524.

Their course they now directed, King Gunther's gallant men,
Up through the East Franks' country, towards the River Main;
And thither led them Hagen, who knew the road of old.
Their marshal was Sir Dankwart, Burgundian hero bold.

1525.

As they from Eastern Franks' land to Schwanefeld rode on,
Well might they be to all men by noble bearing known,
These princes and their kinsmen, heroes deserving fame.
The king on the twelfth morning unto the Danube came.

1526.

Then Hagen, knight of Tronjé, rode of them all foremost;
Good heart and courage gave he unto the Niblung host.
The warrior bold dismounted, down on the sand stood he,
And hastily his warhorse made fast unto a tree.

1527.

The stream was overflowing, no skiff was there to see,
The Nibelungs misdoubted, in great anxiety,
How they should e'er get over; the flood was all too wide.
The gallant knights dismounted hard by the river-side.

1528.

"Much damage," said Sir Hagen, "may here be done to thee,
O Ruler of the Rhineland! Look for thyself and see;
The river is o'erflowing, and mighty is its flood.
I trow we lose ere nightfall here many a hero good."

1529.

What art thou casting at me, Hagen?" the great king spake.
Seek not again to daunt us for thine own honour's sake.
The ford thou shalt find for us, which to that land doth cross,
That we both steeds and raiment may take there without loss."

1530.

"My life to me," quoth Hagen, "is not yet such a load
That I should wish to drown me in this wide, rushing flood!
For by my hands I'd sooner that many a man should die
In Etzel's country yonder: good-will thereto have I.

1531.

"Proud warriors and goodly, stay by the water then,
Whilst I along the river myself seek ferrymen,
Who presently will take us across to Gelfrat's land."
Then took the doughty Hagen his good shield in his hand.

1532.

Well clad was he in armour; his shield he did thereon,
And on his head his helmet; brightly enow it shone.
Above his harness wore he a sword so broad of blade
That wounds right deep and ghastly with either edge it made.

1533.

Then up and down the river he sought some ferryman;
He heard a splash of water; to hearken he began.
'Twas made by elfin women within a fountain fair,
Who fain to cool their bodies were bathing themselves there.

1534.

As soon as Hagen saw them he slyly towards them
No sooner had they seen him than off they ran
That thus they had escaped him did plainly see
He took their raiment from them, no more they were seen

1535.

Then spake one of the mermaids, Hadburga was she hight :
" O Hagen, noble warrior, we'll tell to thee aright,
How thou upon this journey unto the Huns shalt thrive,
If thou, bold thane, our raiment again to us wilt give."

1536.

They floated like to sea-birds before him on the flood.
It seemed to him their foresight must needs be sure and good.
Whatever they should tell him he, therefore, would believe.
To whatsoe'er he ask'd them, wise answers they would give.

1537.

Said she : " To Etzel's country ye certainly may take
This ride ; and I am ready my faith thereon to stake,
That ne'er did heroes journey to any kingdom yet—
In truth ye may believe it— who did such honour get."

1538.

This saying made Sir Hagen within his heart right gay,
Then gave he them their garments and made no more delay.
When they their wondrous raiment forthwith had donn'd again,
The way to Etzel's country aright they did explain.

1539.

Then spake the other mermaid, her name was Siegelind :
" Thee, Hagen, son of Aldrian, to warn I have a mind.
False was it what my sister to get her clothing said :
For comest thou to Hunsland, thou'lt sorely be betray'd.

1540.

" Ay ! homeward shouldst thou turn thee ; yet is there time to
spare :
Seeing that ye, bold heroes, have thus been bidden there,
That all of you may perish within King Etzel's land.
Whoe'er goes riding thither hath Death at his right hand."

1541.

But Hagen spake in answer: "Ye fool me needlessly;
What rhyme or reason is it that all of us should die
Among the Hunfolk yonder, through hate of any man?
More fully then their meaning to tell him they began.

1542.

And one of them spake further: "It must in sooth be so.
That none with life escapeth who to that land doth go,
Save only the king's chaplain; that can we surely tell:
He unto Gunther's kingdom will come back safe and well."

1543.

Then, in grim mood, bold Hagen answer unto her made:
"Twere hard to tell my masters what thou just now hast said.
That yonder 'mid the Hunfolk we all must lose our lives.
Show us across the water, thou wisest of all wives."

1544.

She said: "Against this journey since thou wilt nothing leave,
There yonder in a hostel, unto the river near,
A ferryman is dwelling— and none there is elsewhere."
Then knowing what he wanted he would not tarry there.

1545.

But one of them call'd after the knight discomfited:
"Nay, wait awhile, Sir Hagen, thou wilt too fast ahead;
Hear better how we tell you to cross the sands aright;
The warden of the marchland by name is Else knight."

1546.

"He hath a brother also, Gelfrat the knight is he,
A great lord in Bavaria. Not easy will it be
For you to pass his marches. Ye ought to well beware,
And with the boatman also ye needs must deal with care."

1547.

"So grim is he of humour, he will not let you go,
Unless unto the hero some good intent ye show :
Would ye by him be ferried, give him the payment due.
This land he hath in keeping, and is to Gelfrat true.

1548.

"And if he come not quickly shout to him o'er the flood,
Say 'Amelrich' your name is ;— he was a hero good,
Who, by his foes' contrivance, was driven from this land—
Whene'er his name is spoken the steersman is at hand."

1549.

The haughty Hagen bow'd him before these womenfolk :
But listening in silence no word again he spoke.
Then higher up the river he walk'd, along the sand ;
And there, across the water, he saw a hostel stand.

1550.

Then lustily began he to call across the flood :
"Now, steersman, fetch me over!" shouted the warrior good ;
"Of ruddy gold an armlet I'll give thee for reward.
The matter of my journey, I tell thee, presses hard."

1551.

The boatman was so wealthy to serve he would not brook,
Wherefore a fee but seldom from anyone he took ;
His underlings were likewise of high and haughty mood.
So, still, alone stood Hagen on this side of the flood.

1552.

Then with such might he shouted that, lo, from shore to shore
The river rang : the hero of strength had such great store :
"Now Amelrich come fetch ye, Lord Else's man am I,
Who had to leave this country by force of enmity."

1553.

High on his sword an armlet towards him did he hold—
All bright and shining was it, compact of ruddy gold—
That he, therefore, might row him across to Gelfrat's land.
Then took the haughty boatman himself the oar in hand.

1554.

The ferryman was churlish and obstinate of will—
The lust of great possession doth often end in ill—
He wished to earn from Hagen that band of gold so red :
But from the warrior's weapon grim death he got instead.

1555.

The ferryman pull'd stoutly unto the hitherside ;
But when the man he found not, whose name he had heard cried,
Then was he wroth in earnest. At Hagen's face look'd he,
And thus unto the hero he spake right bitterly :

1556.

"It may be that thou bearest the name of Amelrich ;
To him of whom I mind me thou art in no wise like ;
By father and by mother he brother was to me.
And as thou hast betray'd me, thou here canst bide !" said he.

1557.

"Not I, by God Almighty !" thereon, did Hagen speak :
"I am a stranger warrior, and help for others seek.
Take now in friendly fashion this wage I offer you
To put me o'er the water ; I am your friend right true."

1558.

The ferryman made answer : "Nay, that shall never be !
My well-belovéd masters have many an enemy ;
Therefore I row no strangers across unto their le
If life thou prizest, quickly step out upon the ,

1559.

"Now, do not so," quoth Hagen, "for sorry is my mood,
But take from me in kindness this band of gold so good,
A thousand men and horses across the stream to row."
The boatman grim gave answer: "That will I never do."

1560.

A sturdy oar he lifted, mighty and broad of blade,
And struck a blow at Hagen; an erring stroke he made,
And in the boat he stagger'd and on his knee fell down.
A ferryman so gruesome Hagen had never known.

1561.

And when the haughty stranger still more he would provoke,
A steering board he wielded, and into splinters broke
About the head of Hagen. A stalwart man was he;
Whence came to Else's boatman much sorrow presently.

1562.

In anger fiercely raging, Hagen reach'd out his hand
In haste to seize his scabbard, wherefrom he drew a brand,
And smote his head from off him, and dash'd it to the ground.
Among the proud Burgundians the news flew quickly round.

1563.

But at the self-same moment when he the boatman slew,
The skiff stream-downwards drifted, which gave him cause to rue;
For ere in hand he brought it to weary he began,
Then mighty was the rowing of royal Gunther's man.

1564.

With sturdy strokes the stranger turn'd it about again,
Until within his hand-grasp the stout oar broke in twain.
He would, to reach the warriors, a sandy beach have found:
And having not another, how quickly now he bound

1565.

The splinters with his shield-strap ! 'twas but a slender band.
Towards a coppice steering, he brought the boat to land.
There on the bank-side standing he found his masters three,
And liegemen came to meet him,— a goodly company.

1566.

Him with kind welcome greeted these noble knights and good.
But, when they look'd within it, the wherry reek'd with blood
That from the great wound spurted as he the boatman slew ;
Then from the warriors Hagen had questions not a few.

1567.

No sooner had King Gunther seen the hot blood all red
Within the vessel washing, than, straightway, thus he said :
" Come, why not tell me, Hagen, where is the boatman gone ?
I ween your strength so mighty hath him of life fordone."

1568.

With lying words he answer'd : " As I the boat there found
A desert heath alongside, my hand the rope unbound ;
But never of a boatman have I to-day had sight,
Nor here by fault on my part, hath any had despite."

1569.

Then one of the Burgundians, the noble Gernot, said :
" To-day I needs must sorrow for friends soon to be dead ;
Since we have found no boatman waiting for us at hand,
How are we to come over ? For that in fear I stand."

1570.

Right loudly then cried Hagen : " Lay down upon the green,
Ye squires, the horses' trappings : I mind me I have been
The best of all the rowers that on the Rhine were found.
I'll wager I can bring you across to Gelfrat's ground."

1571.

That they might be the sooner ferried across the flood,
They drave the horses in it; whose swimming was so good,
That, strong as was the current, they cross'd it none the less;
Though some far downwards drifted in very weariness.

1572.

Their gold and all their baggage unto the ship they bore,
Since from this journey's ending they now could turn no more.
And Hagen was the captain; he ferried to the strand
Full many a gallant warrior into the unknown land.

1573.

Of noble knights a thousand first brought he to the shore,
And after these his warriors, and ever there were more:
Of men-at-arms nine thousand he ferried safe to land,
Nor all day long did weary the gallant Tronian's hand.

1574.

When he the whole in safety across the flood had brought,
The warrior bold and eager of that strange story thought
Which the wild water-maidens erewhile to him had said.
Then for King Gunther's chaplain the days were wellnigh sped!

1575.

Amidst the chapel baggage he sought and found the priest,
Who on his hand was leaning, that on the Pyx did rest.
But little that avail'd him when Hagen him did spy:
The all-forsaken chaplain must suffer grievously.

1576.

Out of the skiff he swung him, ere yet a moment pass'd,
Though many voices shouted: "Stay him, good sirs, avast."
Young Giselher fell a-cursing in anger at the sight;
Yet would not Hagen heed him, but did it in despite.

[V.] HOW THE LORDS ALL WENT TO THE HUNG. 150

1577.

Then spake the noble Gernot, the ord of Burgundy:
This chaplain's death, O Hagen, now what would it be?
Had any other done it, it would have pleased you ill,
For what default or reason soughtest thou the gress to kill?

1578.

As best he could he floated, and well escaped that he,
Had any dared to help him: but that was not to be,
Because the mighty Hagen was in too angry mood:
He thrust him under water,— that seemed to us one good.

1579.

Now when the wretched chaplain no help saw in his need,
Backward again he turn'd him: sore was his plight indeed,
Yet though to swim he knew not, that help'd him with His hand,
That safe and sound in body he got more move to stand.

1580.

There stood the hapless chaplain and shook his head and heart,
And thereby well knew Hagen that now there was no smart,
But true the tale was told him by those wild water-sprites,
Thought he: "Then all these warriors perforce must lose their
lives."

1581.

When that the three kings' leges the ship had all unloos'd,
And unto land had carried whate'er they had on board,
Hagen to pieces hew'd it and hung it in the food,
Whereover marvel'd greatly those warriors bold and good.

1582.

"Why dost thou thus, O brother?" to him did Dietwart say,
"How shall we cross the water when in our homeward way,
We ride again from Hunsland unto the Rhine country?"
"Look you," to him said Hagen, "that thing can"

1583.

Then spake the lord of Tronjé: "This do I with the thought
That, should we on this journey have any cravens brought,
Who fain would basely leave us, through cowardice of mind,
They must a shameful ending here in this river find."

1584.

A man there was amongst them from Burgundy who came,
By might of hand a hero, and Volker was his name.
Right cunningly he utter'd all that was in his mind,
And whatsoe'er did Hagen this minstrel good did find.

1585.

The chargers now were ready, each packhorse had its load.
So far, the host no damage had suffered on the road
To daunt them, or to trouble, except the chaplain's loss;
Who needs must to the Rhineland on foot the country cross.

ADVENTURE XXVI.—HOW GELFRAT WAS SLAIN BY
DANKWART.

1586.

When they were all come over unto the further strand,
The king began to question: "Who will throughout this land
Show us the proper pathways,—lest we should stray afar?"
Then spake the valiant Volker: "Alone for that I'll care."

1587.

"Now bide ye yet," said Hagen, "if squire you be or knight,
A friend's word should be follow'd; that seems to me but right.
I have unwelcome tidings to make known unto ye:
No more shall we return to the land of Burgundy!

1588.

"To-day, at early morning, told me mermaidens two,
That we should home return not. Now rede I what to do :
Look to your weapons, heroes, ye needs must well beware ;
Here have we mighty foemen, and warily must fare.

1589.

"I thought to catch her lying, that wily mermaiden :
She swore that none among us should ever come again
Alive unto our country, except the priest alone :
Whom therefore I this morning have done my best to drown."

1590.

Then quickly flew these tidings, from troop to troop they spread :
From the keen heroes' faces for grief the colour fled ;
To sorrow then began they that this court-ride should lead
To bitter death as ending : in sooth, they had good need.

1591.

Nigh Moeringen the place was where they the flood had cross'd
The ferryman of Else there, too, his life had lost.
And thereupon said Hagen : "Seeing that I have made
Foes on the road, I doubt not that we shall be waylaid.

1592.

"To-day that self-same boatman at early dawn I slew ;
Ye know right well the story. Now buckle quickly to,
That if this day should Gelfrat or Else here essay
To fall upon our people, they shall the damage pay.

1593.

"For such bold men I know ye, this cannot fail to be.
'Twere well to let your horses, therefore, go quietly,
That none should deem we're passing along the roads in flight."
"That counsel will I follow," said Giselher the knight.

1594.

"But who shall now our people across the country show?"
They answer'd: "That shall Volker, for right well doth he know
The highways and the byways, a gallant minstrel he."
Before their wish was utter'd, the fiddler they could see

1595.

Standing well-arm'd before them. He bound his helmet on,
And on his battle-mantle the glorious colour shone.
As signal, on a lance-shaft, a pennon red he bore.
But with the kings, thereafter, he fell on trouble sore.

1596.

Meanwhile the boatman's murder became to Gelfrat known
By message all undoubted; and eke the news had gone
To Else the most mighty; and sore aggrieved were they.
They sent to call their chieftains, who came without delay.

1597.

In space of time the shortest,— I would to you make known,—
Were seen unto them riding men, who erewhile had done
Sore scathe and dread achievements in direst stress of war.
Of such there came to Gelfrat seven hundred men or more.

1598.

Their foemen fierce to challenge to ride they then began,
Led by their lords aforesaid. Too readily they ran
To catch the doughty strangers and wipe away their shame.
Of their retainers many by death thereafter came.

1599.

Meanwhile, Hagen of Tronjé for that had taken care;
(How could a hero better for all his friends beware?)
Together with his liegemen the watch by night kept he,
As did his brother Dankwart: 'twas done right prudently.

[XXVI.] HOW GELFRAT WAS SLAIN BY DANKWART.

1600.

The day its course had ended and light they had no more.
He fear'd for friends and comrades with heavy dread and care.
Their road throughout Bavaria beneath their shields they mark'd,
And ere they long had ridden the heroes were attack'd.

1601.

On both sides of the roadway behind them, coming fast,
They heard the tramp of horse-hoofs, too noisy at their haste.
Then spake the gallant Dankwart: "Here will they fall at last.
Now fasten on your helmets,— 'twere wise to wait them out."

1602.

They halted on their journey, naught else was to be done.
They saw how in the darkness the polish'd bucklers shone.
Until at last would Hagen no longer brook delay:
"Who hunts us on the highway?" to him next Gelfrat say.

1603.

In this wise then the Margrave— he of Bavaria—spake:
"Our foemen we are seeking, and now are on their track.
I know not who hath slain me my ferryman this day,
He was a skilful hero, and sorrow well I may."

1604.

To him spake he of Tronjé: "And was that boatman thine?
He would not take us over. The guilt thereof is mine,
For then I slew the warrior; in sooth, there was good need,
Since at his hands I otherwise had got my death instead."

1605.

"I offer'd him for guerdon good gold and raiment fine
To ferry us, O hero! unto this land of thine,
Which anger'd him so sorely that he at me a blow
Aim'd with a sturdy barge-pole; then I grew fier

1606.

"And clutching at my broadsword, I paid him back again
With blows that deeply wounded; so was the hero slain.
Amends therefore I'll make thee, howe'er thou thinkest good."
Then fell the two to wrangle: both were of stubborn mood.

1607.

"Full well I knew," said Gelfrat, "that when this way did ride
Gunther and his retainers, much ill would us betide
Through Hagen, lord of Tronjé. Not hence alive goes he;
For my poor boatman's murder he must the forfeit be."

1608.

Above their bucklers bent they their lances for the thrust,
Sir Gelfrat and Sir Hagen; each at the other must.
Then Else, too, and Dankwart came riding gallantly,
To try each other's mettle; the fight raged fiercely.

1609.

How otherwise might heroes more featly try their strength?
By a hard lance-thrust smitten Hagen the bold, at length,
From off his horse fell backwards, by Gelfrat's hand laid low.
His breast-strap broke, so must he the pain of falling know.

1610.

Among the yeomen's lances arose a clashing sound.
Then up again rose Hagen, who, whilom on the ground
From Gelfrat's blow, had fallen upon the meadow-grass.
His mood, methinks, to Gelfrat of sort ungentle was.

1611.

Who held in charge their horses, that is to me unknown;
The twain were now dismounted and on the sand stood down,—
Hagen, to wit, and Gelfrat, who at each other flew;
The folk of either aided who of the combat knew.

1612.

How mightfully soever Hagen on Gelfrat leapt,
The noble margrave parried; and with one stroke he swept
A great piece off his buckler,— that sparks therefrom were shed;
Whereby King Gunther's vassal was wellnigh stricken dead.

1613.

Thereon he unto Dankwart to call aloud began:
“Dear brother, help me quickly! for, lo, a mighty man
Hath got me at his mercy; he'll make an end of me!”
Then spake the valiant Dankwart: “To that I soon will see.”

1614.

Then nearer sprang the hero and struck so fell a blow
With keen edge of his weapon, that dead he laid him low.
Then fain had Else taken some vengeance for the wight;
But he and all his people went off in sorry plight.

1615.

His brother had been slaughter'd; himself, too, had a wound;
Full eighty of his warriors lay there upon the ground
In grim Death's grip forever; needs must the hero then
Turn round and flee for safety before King Gunther's men.

1616.

Now while they of Bavaria along the road did flee,
The horrid sounds of slaughter were heard unceasingly.
So did the men of Tronjé after their foemen chase,
Who of defeat had dreamt not; too soon it came to pass.

1617.

And while they still were fleeing, Dankwart the thane call'd out
“Upon the road right quickly we ought to turn about
And let them run at leisure: all wet they are with blood
Unto our friends return we; in sooth I deem it good

1618.

Now when they were returned to where the fight had been,
Spake Hagen, lord of Tronjé : "Ye heroes, be it seen
What damage we have suffer'd, and who to us is lost ;
By reason of this battle which Gelfrat's wrath hath cost."

1619.

Four only lost they reckon'd ; these must they grieve for well.
But fully they aveng'd were : for against them there fell
Of the Bavarian warriors a hundred men and more ;
Whereby the Tronians' bucklers were dimm'd and wet with gore.

1620.

Just then a gleam of moonlight between the clouds did break.
"Now look ye well that no one," so to them Hagen spake,
"Betray to my dear masters what we have done this day ;
Let them until the morning free from all trouble stay."

1621.

When they who had been fighting had now caught up the rest,
With weariness the people were grievously distress'd.
"How long," were many asking, "must we be riding yet ?"
And doughty Dankwart answer'd : "No lodging can we get."

1622.

"Until the dawn of morning ye all must onwards ride."
Volker the quick, who all things did for the folk provide,
Bade some one ask the marshal : "Where shall we go towards,
That we may rest our horses and eke our well-loved lords ?"

1623.

Then spake the doughty Dankwart : "In sooth I cannot say,
But there must be no resting before the dawn of day ;
Then, wheresoe'er we find it, upon the grass we'll lie."
Some, when they heard this bidding, were sore aggrieved thereby.

1624.

Were they undiscover'd by the warm blood-stains red,
Until the sun uprising with his bright beams had shed
The day-dawn o'er the mountains; then first the king did see
That they had fought. The hero spake to them wearily

1625.

"How now? ye have, friend Hagen, methinks but small regard
For this my presence with you, seeing ye thus have dared
To stain with blood your armour! now who hath done this
thing?"

"'Twas Else, who set on us last night," he said the king.

1626.

"His ferryman the cause was that we were set upon
My brother came, and Gelfrat was by his hand undone
Then Else fled before us, by direct need beset.
Four men we lost; a hundred of them we left for dead."

1627.

The place at which they rested I know not to declare
But all the country people ere long became aware
That sons of noble Uté to court were in their way
And thus a hearty welcome at Füssen soon had they

1628.

The Bishop Pilgrin, uncle of these high chiefs there,
Was in his heart well-pleased his guests to see
With such a host of warriors thus come to his domain.
That he meant well unto them, was very plainly seen.

1629.

Right gladly were they welcomed in Füssen soon the day
But since there was at Passau no room for them to stay
They needs must cross the river where they had been
There tents and wooden cabins they set up in the plain

1072.

There came they out into the morn for space of one whole day
 and on the next the sun shone. How fairly served were they!
 To harness themselves thence had they to ride on.
 To the king's house they were very quickly known.

1073.

When saw the warriors there and when needful rest,
 and when were approaching the country of their quest,
 They found upon the marches a knight who sleeping lay,
 From whose side a sword and a stout sword took away.

1074.

It was the same was if that same warrior good;
 And yet was it moreover and airy was his mood
 That he had the weapons through heroes passing there.
 It seemed him they the Xargies if margrave Rüdeger.

1075.

"What's that for this discourse?" thereon said Eckewart,
 "This journey is long and I me with all my heart
 Since ever I have begun my luck hath all been gone.
 Mark, the day, Lord Rüdeger, what ill to thee I've done!"

1076.

Now Hagen heard right plainly the noble warrior's woe.
 He gave him again he gave him and six red armlets, too.
 "Thou art a peer of hero, that thou my friend wilt be;
 Thou art, through lonely, thou sleptst upon the lea."

1077.

"My things require thee," said Eckewart thereto;
 "I have them into Hunsland yet sorely do I rue.
 'Tis the life of Siegfried; here art thou held in hate.
 And thyself be careful: in good faith rede I that."

1636.

Now God alone must keep us!" Hagen for answer gave.
In truth no greater trouble these warriors now have
Than that, for kings and liegemen, on lodgings we may light,
Where we in this same country may lay our heads to-night.

1637.

'The horses have been ruin'd by roads so far about ;"
Thus spake the warrior Hagen, "our stores are all run out ;
None can be had for money ; a worthy host we need,
Who ere this day is ended will kindly give us bread."

1638.

Spake Eckewart in answer : "A host to you I'll show :
And such a one ne'er bade you into his house to go,
In any land whatever, as ye may meet with here
If ye, good thanes, are willing to visit Rüdeger.

1639.

"He dwells hard by the highway : of hosts he is the best
That ever had a rooftree. His heart is aye possest
Of kindness, as of flowers are meadows in sweet May ;
If he can succour heroes, glad will he be the day."

1640.

"Wilt thou then," said King Gunther, "be now my messenger,
And see if for my pleasure, my kind friend Rüdeger
Shelter unto my kinsfolk and all our men will give ?
So will I do my utmost to serve him while I live."

1641.

"I'll gladly be the envoy," then answer'd Eckewart.
With right good will so did he upon the errand start.
To Rüdeger declared he what he was bade to say,
Who no such joyful tidings had heard for many a day.

1642.

Folk saw to Bechelaren a knight ride hastily.
Him Rüdeger himself saw : "On yonder road," said he,
"Comes Eckewart fast riding, of Kriemhild's lieges one."
He fancied that the foemen some harm to him had done.

1643.

Then went he to the gateway where he the envoy found
Who laid aside his weapon from off his belt unbound.
The message that he carried he sought not to withhold
From host and friends about him ; but straight his story told.

1644.

Unto the margrave spake he : "I come at the command
Of Gunther, king and ruler of the Burgundian land,
And Giselher his brother, and likewise Gernot, too ;
Each of these warriors sendeth his greeting unto you.

1645.

"The like doth also Hagen, as Volker doth as well,
With true and ready service. And more I have to tell :
That—as the royal marshal sends word to you by me—
The good men much are needing your hospitality."

1646.

With smiling lips unto him made Rüdeger reply :
"Glad am I at your tidings, that kings so great and high
Deign to bespeak my service : they shall not be denied.
If they will cross my threshold 'twill give me joy and pride."

1647.

"Dankwart the marshal likewise begs you by me to tell
If you can furnish house-room for all the rest as well :
For sixty valiant warriors, a thousand knights right good,
And men-at-arms nine thousand ?" Then joyful was his mood.

1648.

ow be these guests right welcome," made answer Rüdiger,
 and all these noble warriors, unto my dwelling here;
 them, as yet, at no time have I a service done.
 ride to meet them, kinsmen and lieges everyone."

1649.

men quickly to their horses hurried each squire and knight.
 Hate'er their master bade them to all of them seem'd right;
 and they in service hasted the readier for that.
 laught wist yet dame Gotlinda, who in her chamber sat.

ADVENTURE XXVII.—HOW THEY CAME TO BECHELAREN.

1650.

Away then went the margrave to where the ladies were,
 His wife and eke their daughter;— to them the tidings fair
 That had but now been brought him he told right speedily:
 That soon their lady's brothers beneath their roof would be.

1651.

in and well-lov'd sweetheart," so Rüdiger then spake,
 noble kings and mighty we must right welcome make,
 they and all their followers are on their way to court.
 Hagen, Gunther's liegeman, thou must greet in good sort.

1652.

re comes another, by name one Dankwart hight;
 all'd Volker, a well-bred, courtly knight.
 ou, Gotlinda, and thou, my daughter, kiss,
 arrior a fitting welcome miss.

1653.

This promised both the ladies and did themselves prepare,
 And sought from out their coffers for raiment rich to wear,
 That they to meet the warriors in fit attire might go.
 Amidst the comely damsels there was a great to-do.

1654.

Of painted women's faces one found there few enough.
 They wore upon their foreheads bright bands of golden stuff,
 Like costly chaplets fashion'd, that thus their lovely hair
 The wind should not dishevel: 'tis truth that I declare.

1655.

Now let us leave the ladies in all this business.
 Across the open country all eager was the press
 Of Rüdiger's retainers to where the princes stay'd;
 Within the margrave's county right welcome were they made.

1656.

As soon as towards him coming the margrave them espied,
 How Rüdiger the valiant in words of gladness cried:
 "Be ye, my lords, right welcome, and likewise all your men;
 How glad am I to see you here in my own domain!"

1657.

In trust, with no misliking, the warriors to him bow'd;
 That he all goodwill bore them to all he plainly show'd.
 That he greeted Hagen, a friend of old was he;
 That he did the like to Volker, the knight of Burgundy.

1658.

Dankwart he also greeted; whereon that boldthane spake:
 "Since thou wilt give us shelter, pray, who shall undertake
 For our people whom we have brought so far?"
 'D him the margrave: "This night be free from care.

1659.

And as to all your people, and aught that in your band,
Horses be it, or raiment, hath come unto this land,
I safely will I guard them and all from loss insure,
That ye shall have no damage, nay, not by a single spur.

1660.

So pitch your tents, ye yeomen, upon the open ground,
For any loss ye suffer I'm willing to be bound.
Take off the horses' bridles and let them freely run."
The like to them but seldom a host ere then had done.

1661.

Right glad of heart the guests were. When all had come to pass,
The lords rode off together. Then down upon the grass
On all sides lay the yeomen, and right good rest they had;
I ween in all the journey they ne'er so softly laid.

1662.

The noble margrave's lady without the castle gate
Had gone with her fair daughter. One saw there with her wait
A crowd of lovely women, and many a maiden fair,
Who wore a store of armlets, and raiment rich and rare.

1663.

The precious gems glowed brightly, and might be seen afar
Upon their rich apparel; so finely clad they were.
And now the guests arriving dismounted speedily.
Ay me! what gallant breeding showed they of Burgundy!

1664.

Of maidens six-and-thirty and many another dame,
As ever eye could wish for so fair in form they came,
And went towards the strangers with many a gallant man.
Ah, then in sooth fair greetings of noble dames began!

1665.

Then kiss'd the margrave's daughter the three kings fittingly,
As also did her mother; Hagen was standing by,
Her father bade her kiss him; she cast a look at him,
And fain had she not done it— she thought he look'd so grim.

1666.

Yet straightway must she do it, since so the master said;
Her cheeks were changed in colour to mingled white and red.
Then Dankwart likewise kiss'd she, and then the Minstrel too;
By reason of his valour such greeting was his due.

1667.

The margrave's youthful daughter took presently the hand
Of Giselher, the warrior from the Burgundian land:
Her mother, too, did likewise to Gunther, the brave king.
So went they with the heroes in gladness revelling.

1668.

The host along with Gernot went into a wide hall,
Where they were quickly seated, both knights and ladies all:
Good wine was call'd for straightway, which to the guests they
gave.

Ay, surely never heroes could better treatment have.

1669.

With many an eager eye-glance the men look'd lovingly
On Rüdeger's young daughter: she was so fair to see.
Ay, in his thoughts embraced her full many a warrior good,
And right well she deserved it; but she was proud of mood:

1670.

Think might they as it pleased them, such thing could not be
done.

And to and fro men's glances meanwhile oft lit upon
Right many a dame and maiden; plenty were seated there.
"The noble minstrel unto the host did bear.

1671.

According to the custom they sever'd then in two,
The warriors and the ladies to separate rooms withdrew.
In the wide hall the tables in order straight were set,
And soon the stranger guest-folk with royal service met.

1672.

So do her guests more honour the noble margravine
At down with them at table; her daughter was unseen,
Left with the younger children, where fittingly she sat;
The guests, who miss'd her presence, were sorely vext thereat.

1673.

When meat and drink abundant had been enjoy'd by all
The ladies fair were usher'd again into the hall.
There lack'd not mirthful story, nor jesting manifold:
Busy of tongue was Volker, a knight of mood right bold.

1674.

Thus spake the noble minstrel, aloud that all might heed:
"Most rich and noble margrave, God hath with you indeed
Dealt graciously, in granting so fair a dame for wife,
And likewise in bestowing on you a joyous life.

1675.

"If haply," said the minstrel, "I were a prince of blood,
And wore the crown of kingship, surely for wife I would
Make choice of your fair daughter, for her my heart doth woo;
Lovesome she is to look on and good and noble too."

1676.

Then said to him the margrave: "How could it ever be,
That any king should ask for my daughter dear of me?
We are but stranger-people, my wife as well as I:
What boots it that the damsel so fair is bodily?"

1677.

To him made answer Gernot, that man of breeding high :
 " If I would have a sweetheart, my heart to satisfy,
 So would I such a woman be ever glad to wed."
 Then Hagen put his word in, with kindly speech, and said :

1678.

" 'Tis still to be remember'd Lord Giselher should wed :
 Of ancestry so noble the margravine is bred,
 That I and all his liegemen would serve her willingly,
 If with a crown upon her she came to Burgundy."

1679.

To Rüdiger this counsel in every way seem'd good,
 As likewise to Godlinda : ay, both were glad of mood.
 And soon the chiefs so order'd that she was bride beloved
 Of Giselher the noble, as well a king behaved.

1680.

"When nought is bound to happen who may the same gainsay?
 Forthwith they bade the damsel to court to take her way.
 They took an oath to give him the winsome maid to wife,
 And he, on his side, promised to love her as his life.

1681.

They gave the maiden warrant for castles and for land,
 And he, to confirm'd it by oath and his right hand,
 Did Lord Gernot, that thus it should be done.
 Then to them the margrave : " Though castles I have none,

1682.

" You will I at all times in faithful friendship hold :
 I'll give unto my daughter of silver and of gold
 As much as five score horses may carry at their best,
 If so well-pleased, in honour, the hero's kin may rest."

1683.

The pair were thereon bidden within a ring to stand,
According to the custom. Of many youths a band,
In mood for merry-making, stood opposite the twain,
And thought what they were minded, as youngsters still are fain.

1684.

When they began to question, and ask'd the winsome maid
If she would have the warrior, she was a whit dismay'd :
And yet she still was minded to take the goodly wight ;
She blush'd but at the question, as any maiden might.

1685.

Then Rüdeger her father bade her to answer "Yea !"
That she would gladly take him. Whereon, without delay,
His white hands stretch'd towards her to fold her lovingly,
Young Giseler came forward,— short though their joy must be !

1686.

"Ye noble kings and mighty," thereon the margrave spake ;
"When home again your journey to Burgundy ye take,
Then I (as is the custom) will give my child to you,
That ye may take her with you." That they engaged to do.

1687.

Noisy as were the revels, at last they had an end.
The damsels to their chambers were bidden then to wend ;
In sleep the guests, too, rested till daybreak did appear ;
Then victuals were made ready ; for all the host took care.

1688.

When they their fast had broken fain would they forward go
Towards the Hunnish country. "I pray you, do not so,"
Besought their host right noble ; "awhile ye yet must stay ;
Since I no guests so welcome have seen for many a day."

To this noble Dendron a
Whence will you get the
Which is a very rare
The best is known, and

"My mother's name is
My mother's name is
My mother's name is
My mother's name is

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9.
to speak apart withdrew,
And the lord Dietrich, too :
"S, thou noble warrior good,
and what may be her mood.

10.
"What can I tell you more ?
ing and wailing sore,—
manner piteous,
for stalwart Siegfried's loss."

11.
at boldest man declared,
the doom whereof we've heard ;
there for ourselves to see
among the Huns shall be."

12.
to court rode on their way
in glorious array.
among the Hunfolk there
at kind of man he were.

1733-
(that was enough alone,)
Siegfried to death had done,—
the husband of Kriemhild—
the court was wellnigh fill'd.

1734-
the hero was, no doubt ;
haunted ; his hair was fleck'd about
long in the shank was he,
he walk'd right royally.

1723.

When noble Dietrich saw them their way towards him make,
 Perchance he had would hearken to what the warrior spake
 Unto the sons of Etzel. Their journey grieved him sore :
 The truth, he thought, Sir Rubeke had known and told before.

1724.

"Be welcome, sons, right welcome, Gunther and Giselher,
 And Gernot, too, and Hagen : and, not the less, Volker
 And swift and ready Dankwart : Have ye not understood
 That ever her Niblung hero Kriemhilda yet doth brood?"

1725.

"Then let her brood for ever!" Hagen in answer said,
 "For many a long year is it since he was stricken dead.
 To love the King of Hungary is now her duty plain :
 Siegfried hath long been buried ; he comes not back again."

1726.

"Now let us, if it please you, leave Siegfried's wounds alone ;
 Whilst Dame Kriemhilda liveth evil may still be done."
 So did the noble Dietrich, the knight of Bern, declare.
 "Thou Mainzay of the Niblungs, to guard thyself beware!"

1727.

"And wherefore should I guard me?" the high-born king replied ;
 "Tidings we had from Etzel (what should I ask beside?)
 That, came we hither riding, 'twould give him much content
 My sister Kriemhild, likewise, hath many a message sent."

1728.

"If I may give you counsel," so Hagen to them spake,
 "Beg that the noble Dietrich and his good warriors make
 Some declaration of what they have in mind,
 To what humour Dame Kriemhild is inclined."

1729.

Then the three mighty chieftains to speak apart withdrew,
Sunther to wit, and Gernot, and the lord Dietrich, too :
' Now, knight of Bern, pray tell us, thou noble warrior good,
What of the queen thou knowest, and what may be her mood.

1730.

The knight of Bern made answer : " What can I tell you more ?
I hear her ev'ry morning weeping and wailing sore,—
This wedded wife of Etzel— in manner piteous,
To the great God of Heaven, for stalwart Siegfried's loss."

1731.

" It may not be averted,"— that boldest man declared,
Volker, the fiddle-player,— " the doom whereof we've heard ;
To court we're bound to journey, there for ourselves to see
What fate for us good warriors among the Huns shall be."

1732.

So hence the bold Burgundians to court rode on their way
After their country's fashion, in glorious array.
And many a bold man marvell'd among the Hunfolk there
At Hagen, lord of Tronjé, what kind of man he were.

1733.

For since was told the story, (that was enough alone,)
How he the Netherlander Siegfried to death had done,—
The stoutest of all warriors, the husband of Kriemhild—
With questions about Hagen the court was wellnigh fill'd.

1734.

Of goodly growth and presence the hero was, no doubt ;
Broad-shouldered and deep-chested ; his hair was fleck'd about
With streaks of grisly colour ; long in the shank was he,
And stony was his visage ; he walk'd right royally.

1735.

Then quarters were appointed for the Burgundian men.
The whole of Gunther's followers were sunder'd from him then.
This by the queen was compass'd, with hatred for him fill'd;
Hence all the yeomen, later, were in their hostel kill'd.

1736.

Since Dankwart, Hagen's brother, the marshal had been made,
The king with zeal commended the men to him; and bade
That he would seek their comfort and let them have their fill.
This chief of the Burgundians bore all of them goodwill.

1737.

And now came Queen Kriemhilda with all her company
That she might greet the Niblungs with feignéd courtesy.
But Giselher, her brother, she kiss'd and took his hand.
This Hagen saw, and tighter he laced his helmet's band.

1738.

"In view of such a greeting," thus Hagen blurted out,
"A prompt and ready warrior may well have some misdoubt!
To kings and to their vassals greetings unlike befall:
We've made no lucky journey to this high festival."

1739.

"To those who fain would see thee," said she, "now welcome be:
Thou shalt not have a greeting for friendship's sake from me.
Say what it is thou bringest from Worms beyond the Rhine,
That thou so great a welcome shouldst have from me and mine."

1740.

"If I had heard the tidings," so Hagen spake again,
"That you for gifts were looking at hands of everythane,
Had I myself been wealthy I would have twice bethought
Or ever to this country my gifts for you I brought."

1741.

"'Tis rather you, who tidings to me should give : to wit,
The Nibelungen treasure, what have ye done with it?
It was mine own possession, and that right well you knew :
'Twas this ye should have brought me to Etzel's land with you."

1742.

"I' faith, my Lady Kriemhild, 'tis now full many a day
Since when at my disposal the Niblung treasure lay ;
At bidding of my masters 'twas sunk in the Rhine-tide :
There till the Day of Judgment, in sooth, it may abide."

1743.

Then spake the queen in answer : "'Tis even as I thought !
Right little of it have you for me to this land brought,
Although 'twas mine, and whilom within my power it lay ;
Since when I've spent thereover full many a dreary day."

1744.

"The devil a bit I bring you !" Sir Hagen fell to swear :
"I have my shield to carry, and that's enough to bear,
Together with my mail-coat ; my helm's a trifling thing,
My sword I have in hand though, so naught for you I bring."

1745.

Thereon the queen spake loudly unto those warriors all :
"Let no man any weapon carry into the hall ;
Give them to me, ye heroes, I'll keep them safe for you !"
"Nay, by my troth," cried Hagen, "that will we never do !

1746.

"I covet not the honour, gentle princess and fair,
That thou unto the hostel my shield thyself shouldst bear.
Nor other of my weapons : thou hast a queen become ;
So taught me not my father ; I will be chambergroom."

When noble Dietrich
Perchance ye fain woe
Unto the sons of Ute
The truth, he thought

"Be welcome, sirs, I
And Gernot, too, an
And swift and ready
That o'er her Niblung

"Then let her brood
"For many a long
To love the King
Siegfried hath long

"Now let us, an
Whilst Dame Kriemhild
Did the noble
Mainstay

and wherefor
ridings we
at, came w
y sister Kriemhild

"If I may
"R

1735.

For the Burgundians
were summer time
with harvest on the
in their base

1736.

the marshal that was
men to him and
let them have their
of them goodwill

1737.

all her company
with signed courtesy.
took his hand
the hand

1738.

Hagen turned out,
may well have some misdoubt!
greetings make tell:
in this night

1739.

said she, "now welcome be:
for friendship's sake from me
from Worms beyond the Rhine,
shouldst have from me and mine"

1740.

Hagen spake again,
hands of every thane,
have twice bethought
I brought."

1753.

Then one of Kriemhild's liegemen to answer him began :
"He is by birth of Tronjé, his sire was Aldrian.
How blithe so e'er he bears him, he hath a spirit grim.
You shall yourself discover I tell no lies of him."

1754.

"How shall I have occasion to know he is so stern ?"
(The many sly devices as yet he had to learn,
Wherewith, to catch her kinsmen, the queen sought to contrive
That none of them from Hunsland again might come alive.)

1755.

"Well knew I that same Aldrian, a liegeman of mine own,
And here with me he won him much honour and renown.
'Twas I a knight who dubb'd him, and gave him of my gold ;
My faithful Helka bore him much kindness, too, of old.

1756.

"And all, by that same token, of Hagen know I well.
Into my hands for hostage two goodly children fell,
He and the Spanish Walther ; who being to manhood bred,
I sent back Hagen ; Walther with Hildegunda fled."

1757.

He thought of the old stories and all that happ'd of yore,
His olden friend of Tronjé he gladly saw once more,
Who in his youth good service to him ne'er fail'd to lend.
Soon he in age repaid him by death of many a friend.

ADVENTURE XXIX.—HOW HE STOOD NOT UP BEFORE HER.

1758.

This famous pair of warriors asunder then withdrew,
Hagen, the lord of Tronjé, and noble Dietrich, too.
Whereon across his shoulder look'd Gunther's man around
In hope to see a comrade, whom in a trice he found ;

1759.

For there Sir Volker standing by Giselher he saw ;
He begg'd that cunning minstrel aside with him to draw,
For well was he acquainted with his unyielding mood.
In sooth, he was in all points a warrior bold and good.

1760.

They left the lords together standing in the courtyard.
'Twas seen how they twain only, and not another, fared
Across the court wide-stretching before a palace great ;
Those chosen men of valour had fear of no man's hate.

1761.

They sat upon a settle against the palace front,
Hard by a hall which Kriemhild herself to use was wont.
Upon their bodies their noble raiment shone,
Who beheld them would gladly them have known.

1762.

East of the forest those haughty heroes then
Upon and gazed at by all the Hunnish men.
Life of Fath they athwart a window-pane :
Whereby da was sorely grieved again.

1763.

t brought to mind her sorrow ; she fell to weeping then,
Whereat was mickle marvel among King Etzel's men :
What could have thus so quickly troubled their lady's mood ?
He answer'd : " That hath Hagen, ye heroes bold and good."

1764.

They spake unto the lady : " How can this thing have been
When we ourselves but lately have you so happy seen ?
None can have been so hardy such evil to have wrought :
Else bid us to avenge it ; his life shall go for naught."

•

1765.

" For ever would I serve him who would my wrongs repay,
To give him all he ask'd for I would be ready'aye.
Upon my knees I beg you," so spake the royal wife,
" Avenge me now on Hagen, that he may lose his life."

1766.

Then sixty gallant warriors girded their armour on,
Who, for the love of Kriemhild, were keen to set upon
And make an end of Hagen— the ever valiant one—
And likewise of the minstrel. 'Twas all with forethought done.

1767.

But when the queen beheld them, how small a band they made,
In grim and gloomy humour she to the heroes said :
" Ye must leave unaccomplish'd what ye would take in hand :
Ay, never against Hagen so few will dare to stand !

1768.

" How strong and bold soever Hagen of Tronjé be,
The man who sits beside him is stronger far than he,
Volker, the fiddler, namely ; he is an evil wight.
These heroes to encounter ye will not find so light."

— **—**

—

११६-

1786.

1786.
 seem'd, in ~~her~~ ~~own~~ ~~conceit~~
 to stand up ~~from~~ ~~her~~ ~~seat~~
 Whereon, with fire-like mien,
 came up the noble queen

1787.

“Now tell me, Hagen, who sent to bid you here,
 in our country thou darest to appear?
 who so well knowest what thou hast done to me?
 u been well adviséd thou best hadst let it be.”

1788.

hath sent to fetch me,” Hagen in answer said :
 ‘her to this country three warriors you bade ;
 ters they are calléd, to them I service owe.
 royal journey I scarce could fail to go.”

1789.

he : “Now tell me further, how was it thou didst that
 nich thou hast deservéd my everlasting hate ?
 was it who didst Siegfried, my well-loved husband, slay ;
 n I must mourn for ever until my dying day.”

1790.

pake : “What boots that further? Of talk we have no need.
 that self-same Hagen who did to death Siegfried,
 mighty-handed hero. How dearly he repaid
 flouts which Dame Kriemhilda on fair Brunhilda laid !

1791.

is not to be doubted, O great and mighty queen,
 all your baleful sorrows that I have guilty been.
 be it man or woman, let them avenge who will ;
 I should then gainsay you, I’ve done you grievous ill.”

1792.

Now hark ye, warriors, he doth not e’en deny
 k’d my sorrow ! What may befall thereby
 of Etzel, of no account I hold.”
 ne another those haughty thanes and bold.

It doubtless had betaken
The strife, that these two comrades in honour
seeing how of it came the glory and renown
In dread the others shrank from the peer the peer in thought

Then spake one of the warriors
From what I grew up promised
For sake of no one's largesse
Ay! to our ruin go we

Whereafter spake another:
Were anyone to give me
I'd care not to contend with
For dread of the swift glances

"Hagen have I known also,
Thus little can be told me
In two-and-twenty battles
Whereby hath heartfelt sorrow

1796.
and from his own mouth
about that knight's misdeeds
I've seen him in the strife
betaken many a wife

1797.
he and the Spaniard
offtimes a battle met
and many such betel;
much to his honour tel

1798.
same warrior was but a child a year
but youngsters, how gray are now their hairs!
wisdom, a man of ruth is he
in Balmung, won by foul treachery."

1799.

th that the thing was settled,— that none should strike a blow.
 hereby the queen was stricken unto the heart with woe.
 he heroes all disbanded : fearful lest death indeed
 dealt them by the fiddler : in sooth they had good need.

1800.

hen spake anon the fiddler : “ We have right plainly seen
 hat foemen here beset us, as we forewarn’d have been.
 ow to the court return we and seek the sovrans there :
 hat no one, then, our masters to meet in strife may dare.

1801.

How oft a man, faint-hearted, will let a chance slip by,
 When if a friend beside him upheld him cheerfully
 And with good understanding, he would not do the same.
 Right many a man by forethought is saved from loss and shame.”

1802.

“ Where you go I will follow,” Hagen was quick to say ;
 Then back into the courtyard forthwith they took their way,
 Where still in grand assembly waited the knightly crowd.
 And then the valiant Volker began to speak aloud

1803.

And say unto his masters : “ How long here will ye stay
 To let yourselves be crowded ? To court ye should away,
 And from the king discover what he in mind may have.”
 Then might one see gather the heroes good and brave.

1804.

The prince of Bern, Sir Dietrich, took hold of by the hand
 Gunther, the mighty ruler of the Burgundian land.
 Irnfried was fain with Gernot, that right bold man, to fare,
 And Rüdeger went walking to court with Giselher.

1805.

Howe'er the rest companion'd, and so to court pass'd on,
Betwixt Volker and Hagen of parting there was none,
Save only in one struggle, which ended their two lives,
And caus'd sad weeping later to many noble wives.

1806.

Upon the kings attending one saw to court go then
Their nobly-born retainers, a thousand gallant men ;
And sixty warriors also along with them had come ;
The same that valiant Hagen had brought with him from home.

1807.

And Haward eke and Iring, a pair of chosen worth,
By one another walking, went with the sovrans forth.
Dankwart and also Wolfhart, athane of courage rare ;
These well before the others upheld their honour there.

1808.

When came the lord of Rhineland within the palace door,
Etzel, the mighty monarch refrained himself no more,
But from his seat upsprang he, seeing him entering,
A better greeting never was given by a king.

1809.

"Be welcome, my lord Gunther, and you, lord Gernot, too,
And Giselher, your brother. My zealous service true,
I have already sent you to Worms beyond the Rhine.
And all your followers also shall welcome be as mine.

1810.

"I bid a hearty welcome to you, ye knightly pair,
To Volker the right valiant and eke to Hagen there,
From me and from my lady, unto this land of mine.
She messengers in plenty hath sent ye to the Rhine."

1811.

Iagen of Tronjé answered : "So heard I, more than once !
And had I for my masters not come unto the Huns,
Yet would I you to honour have ridden to this land."
The noble host then kindly his guests took by the hand ;

1812.

And to the seat he brought them where he himself had sat,
Then to the guests they offer'd (they busily did that),
In wide-mouth'd golden goblets, wine, mead and mulberry,
And bade to the newcomers a welcome heartily.

1813.

Then spake the royal Etzel : "I will to you confess
Naught in this world could give me a greater happiness
Than ye have given me, heroes, in coming thus to me ;
Whereby the queen is also from mickle grief set free.

1814.

"And ofttimes have I marvell'd what was the fault in me—
So many guests right noble have I been wont to see—
That ye unto my country to come did never deign ?
But now that I have seen you to joy is turn'd my pain."

1815.

Said Rüdeger in answer (a knight of noble mood) :
"Well may you see them gladly ; their faith indeed is good,
And all my lady's kinsfolk the same can well uphold ;
They bring unto your palace full many a warrior bold."

1816.

The even of Midsummer, at mighty Etzel's court
These princes made their entry ; and seldom hath report
Told of such royal welcome as on these chiefs he spent.
Now was it time for eating ; and all to table went.

1817.

Amidst his guests more nobly a host ne'er took his seat.
For them there was abundance whereof to drink and eat,
And everything they wanted 'it was all ready made;
For truly of these heroes great marvels had been said.

ADVENTURE XXX.—HOW THEY KEPT WATCH
AND WARD.

1818.

Now was the daylight ended and night began to close.
Amid the wayworn warriors disquietude arose
For when they were to rest them and to their beds begone.
This mooted was by Hagen; and soon it was made known.

1819.

Unto the host spake Gunther: "God grant you long to live!
We now would hence to slumber; we pray thee leave to give.
We'll come to-morrow morning if thou dost order so."
Right pleasantly agreed he, and bade his guests to go.

1820.

One saw the people crowding the guests on every side.
Then Volker the undaunted unto the Hunfolk cried:
"How dare ye get in front of the warrior's very feet?
If ye will not give over with trouble ye will meet.

1821.

"A fiddle-stroke so heavy on one of you I'll lay,
That, hath he a well-wisher, that same may rue the day.
Give place there to us warriors! 'twill be the best for you.
Folk call ye knights, but little ye have akin thereto."

1822.

Whilst spake the fiddle-player so wrathfully his mind,
The valiant Hagen turn'd him, and gave a glance behind.
Said he: "The gallant minstrel hath warn'd you properly;
Ye heroes of Kriemhilda back to your homes go ye.

1823.

"The plan ye are devising will not come off, I trow.
Come back to-morrow morning if ye have aught to do,
And leave us weary strangers this night to rest in peace;
I ween that heroes ever so do in such-like case."

1824.

Anon the guests were taken into a roomy hall,
Which found they well provided, to suit the warriors all,
With richly furnish'd bedsteads, that were both wide and long.
The while Dame Kriemhild plotted to do them grievous wrong.

1825.

Right goodly mats from Arras all round about were spread,
Of bright-hued wool-stuffs woven; and many a cover-bed
Wrought of Arabian samite, the finest that might be;
Whereon were borders broider'd that shone right gloriously.

1826.

The coverlets of ermine did many a man espy,
And others of black sable, whereunder they might lie
And pass the night in comfort until the dawn of day.
A king and all his courtiers so softly never lay.

1827.

"O woe, for this night's sojourn!" so spake young Giselher
"And woe for all my comrades who hither with us fare!
Howbeit that my sister so kind a bidding gave,
By cause of her, I fear me, we all our deaths shall have."



1828.

"Now let your mind be easy," Hagen the thane answer'd:
 "I will from now till morning myself keep watch and ward;
 And well I swear to guard you until the break of day.
 Till then be all untroubled; then, save himself who may!"

1829.

Then bow'd they all before him and gave him thanks therefore,
 And to their beds betook them: nor was it long before
 Laid down in rest and slumber was every goodly man.
 To don his arms the hero— Hagen the bold—began.

1830.

Then up and spake the minstrel, Volker the gallant thane:
 "If thou dost not disdain it, then, Hagen, I am fain
 To-night to keep guard with thee, until the morning break."
 Right heartily the hero his thanks to Volker spake:

1831.

"Now God in Heaven reward you, Volker, my comrade true!
 To none in all my troubles save only unto you
 Would I for aidance turn me, if need should e'er befall.
 One day I will repay you, if Death do not forestall."

1832.

Then in their shining raiment they twain their bodies clad,
 And each of them his buckler upon his forearm had.
 They went without the castle to stand the gateway by,
 And there the guests they guarded: 'twas done right faithfully.

1833-

Then from his arm unbraced
 A good one— which 'gainst the wall he placed.
 He'll be hasten'd, and there his mule seized,
 And thus a hero, his friends therewith he pleased.

1834.

Beneath the doorway sat he upon a seat of stone ;
A braver fiddle-player in sooth had ne'er been known.
With such sweet-sounding music upon the strings he play'd,
That all the high-born strangers their thanks to Volker paid.

1835.

The sweet clang of his viol made all the house resound.
His strength and skill together right excellent were found.
More softly and more sweetly to fiddle he began,
And lull'd upon their couches full many a troubled man.

1836.

And when they all were sleeping, and he thereof was sure,
The thane took up his buckler upon his arm once more,
And went outside the chamber before the tower to stand,
To guard the sleeping strangers against Kriemhilda's band.

1837.

When halfway spent the night was, or earlier it might be,
The gallant Volker, watching, a shining helm could see
Far off amid the darkness. 'Twas one of Kriemhild's men,
Who all to do a mischief unto the guests were fain.

1838.

Then spake the fiddle-player : "My friend, Sir Hagen, there,
Together it is fitting that we this trouble share.
I've seen some folk in armour before the house but now,
Else I am much mistaken, they'll set on us, I trow."

1839.

In hold thy peace," quoth Hagen, "and let them nearer
 ie.

You can see us, our swords will have struck home
 their helmets for them, with double-handed might.
Throw them back to Kriemhild, methinks, in sorry plight !"

1840.

One of the Hunnish warriors had soon enough espied
 That guarded was the doorway ; how suddenly he cried :
 "The matter we intended, in sooth will not go well.
 I see the fiddle-player standing as sentinel !

1841.

"A brightly polish'd helmet upon his head hath he
 Of pure, hard-temper'd metal, and strong, and blemish-free.
 His hauberk's rings are glowing as fiery embers would.
 By him stands also Hagen : the guests have watchmen good."

1842.

Forthwith they turn'd them backwards. When Volker that espied,
 Again to his companion in wrathful voice, he cried :
 "Now let me from the palace after the warriors go ;
 Of Dame Kriemhilda's liegemen somewhat I fain would know."

1843.

"Nay, do it not," said Hagen ; "I pray you by my love !
 These ever-ready warriors, if from the house you move,
 Would with their swords, I doubt not, bring you such straits
 to face,
 That I should have to help you, were't death to all my race.

1844.

"For whilst we two together are busy in the fray,
 or four among them will to the house away,
 by force an entrance, and some foul mischief do
 sleeping comrades, which we shall ever rue."

1845.

Volker spake in answer : "Let it be settled so ;
 at I've seen them coming at least we'll let them know,
 Kriemhild's men hereafter shall never dare deny
 that they would fain against us have wrought vile treachery."

1846.

With that, towards them Volker sent forth a lusty shout :
 "Ye nimble knights, in armour why go ye thus about ?
 Ye warriors of Kriemhilda, if ye on foray ride,
 Myself and my companion ye should have at your side !"

1847.

No word there came in answer. Then wrathful wax'd his mood :
 "Fie on ye, skulking rascals !" shouted the hero good ;
 "Would ye have caught us sleeping, and murder'd every one ?
 So foul a deed on heroes hath never yet been done."

1848.

Unto the queen right truly was told how lucklessly
 Her messengers had prosper'd. Good cause for grief had she.
 Then otherwise contrived she : so cruel was her mood ;
 By which ere long to perish were heroes bold and good.

ADVENTURE XXXI.—HOW THEY WENT TO CHURCH.

1849.

"So cold I feel my armour : " quoth Volker presently,
 "Methinks the night is wearing and soon will ended be ;
 I mark that by the breezes ; 'twill very soon be day."
 Then many a man awoke they who still in slumber lay.

1850.

■ Morning light broke over the guests within the hall.
 ■ began on all sides the warriors to call,
 ■ if to the Minster to matins they would fare.
 ■ le, in Christian fashion, the bells were chiming clear

1851.

So diverse was the chanting, thereby 'twas plain to see
That Christians and heathens were not in unity.
And yet the men of Gunther to church would go withal ;
They from their beds together had risen one and all.

1852.

The warriors then array'd them in clothes so finely wrought,
That better raiment never by heroes had been brought
To any king's dominions. Ill did it Hagen please.
Said he: "Now should ye, heroes, don other suits than these.

1853.

"Enough about the matter ye surely understand ;
Ye should, instead of roses, bear weapons in the hand.
For caps beset with jewels take shining helms and good ;
Since we are well-advised of wicked Kriemhild's mood.

1854.

"This day must we do battle, I will to you declare ;
Instead of silken doublets, ye should your hauberks wear,
And in the place of mantles take bucklers good and wide—
That if they seek a quarrel, the brunt ye may abide.

1855.

"My well-belovéd masters, your friends and kinsmen too,
Go now unto the Minster,— that should ye gladly do—
And pray to God Almighty in your distress and need :
For know now, of a surety, that Death is nigh indeed.

1856.

"See, too, that ye forget not aught ill that ye have done,
And with true zeal and duty stand ye before God's throne.
Of this, right noble warriors, I warn ye well afore,
Save God in Heaven may grant it, ye'll hear no masses more."

1857.

hey went unto the Minster, the princes with their men
 ut in the hallow'd precincts bold Hagen spake again
 nd bade them halt, lest any should leave the company :
 None knoweth what the Hunfolk to us may do," said he.

1858.

My friends, set down your bucklers upright before your feet
 and answer ye to any who may unkindly greet
 With deep and deadly sword-stroke. Hark ye, to Hagen's rede
 so will ye find it worthy to serve you in your need."

1859.

With that Hagen and Volker, the twain together, went
 in front of the great Minster. 'Twas done with this intent,
 That they might make it certain that the king's wife would need
 To crowd them as she enter'd: their mien was grim indeed.

1860.

Then came the land's Upholder, and eke his lady fair.
 And deck'd about the body with raiment rich and rare
 One saw the doughty warriors along with them go by ;
 The dust aloft was whirling from Kriemhild's chivairy.

1861.

Now when the mighty ruler in armour saw array'd
 The kings and their companions, how quickly then he said :
 "Why thus my friends behold I marching with helmets on ?
 'Twould grieve me, on my honour, had aught to them been done.

1862.

"I'll gladly make atonement, however they think good ;
 If any here have vexed them in either heart or mood
 I give them full assurance that sorely
 And whatsoe'er they bid me I'll do it."

1863.

To this made answer Hagen : " By none have we been harm'd
It is my masters' custom to go thus fully arm'd
To every courtly meeting,— until three days have run ;
To Etzel we will tell it if aught to us be done."

1864.

This answer made by Hagen Kriemhilda heard right well.
How hatefully upon him her sidelong glances fell !
Yet would she not more frankly her country's customs own,
Though they to her a long time in Burgundy were known.

1865.

Yet though her hate towards him so cruel was and fell,
If anyone to Etzel the truth had dared to tell,
He doubtless had prevented what came to pass ere long :
But none of them would tell it, her mastery was so strong.

1866.

Then with the queen advancing there came a mighty band ;
But this same pair of warriors deign'd not to take their stand
Two hand-breadths further backward, which made the Hunfolk
wroth.

Ay, they must press and jostle with those bold heroes both.

1867.

The chamberlains of Etzel were ill-content at this,
And would upon the warriors have somewhat wrought amiss,
If they had dared to do it the king's High Grace before.
There was a mighty jostling, but so far nothing more.

1868.

When service now was ended and they would thence be gone,
All suddenly on horseback appear'd full many a Hun ;
And many a beauteous lady was with Kriemhilda seen ;
Even thousand warriors came riding with the queen.

1870.

Kriemhilda with her ladies within the window sat
 long with royal Etzel : well pleased was he thereon.
 n would they see the jousting those doughty heroes should
 ! in the lists before them what warriors strange there rode !

1871.

And thither had the marshal the right brave Dietrich, too,
 come with his squires attending : his lord's own name
 with him, too, he had taken from the Burgundian land
 the steeds for the bold Nibungs well saddled were at hand.

1872.

Then they their steeds had mounted— the kings and every man—
 forthwith the stalwart Volker it counsel them began,
 that all should tilt together after their country's mode ;
 a course of which, thereafter, the chiefs right nobly rode.

1873.

For what the hero counsell'd they did not underrate.
 The crowding and the shouting were both exceeding great.
 Within the wide inclosure was gather'd many a man ;
 Then Etzel and Kriemhilda to gaze thereon began.

1874.

Six hundred knights together upon the field appear'd,
 The warriors of Dietrich, coming the guests toward.
 They thought with the Burgundians some knightly sport to try,
 And would, had he allow'd it, have done it readily.

1875.

Ay me ! what goodly warriors forthwith towards them made !
 But when to the lord Dietrich the news thereof was said,
 With Gunther's men forbade he that any sport should be.
 He fear'd for his retainers : and surely need had he.

1875.

When they of Bern pass'd onward, and from the place had gone,
The men from Bechelaren, of Rüdeger's, came on.
Before the hall five hundred with shield on arm rode they :
Well pleased had been the margrave could they have kept away.

1876.

Then wisely, as behoved him, he rode the host throughout,
And said unto his warriors, they could no longer doubt
But that the men of Gunther ill will towards them had :
If they would leave the combat he would in truth be glad.

1877.

When these now had pass'd onward— high-mettled heroes bold—
Came horsemen from Thuringia, as hath to us been told ;
And then the knights of Denmark, a thousand gallant men ;
One saw right many a lance-shaft fly in the onset then.

1878.

Then Haward came and Irnfried unto the tournament.
The Rhinelanders a challenge to them had proudly sent.
The warriors of Thuringia were offer'd many a joust ;
In many a noble buckler were lances deeply thrust.

1879.

There, too, the lordly Bloedlin came with his thousands three.
By Etzel and Kriemhilda right closely watch'd was he ;
For all the knightly jousting was held within their sight.
The queen rejoiced to see it for Burgundy's despite.

1880.

And Gibecke and Scrutan unto the melée rode,
With Hornboge and Ramung, all in the Hunnish mode.
They held the lists, withstanding the chiefs of Burgundy ;
And over the king's palace the shafts went whirling high.

1881.

hate'er was done by any was nothing else but sound.
 loud was the din that echo'd palace and hall around,
 om clash of shields and bucklers, by Gunther's liegemen made;
 hence praises and great honour unto his folk were paid.

1882.

he ardour of their pastime so mighty was and great,
 hat from the goodly horses whereon the heroes sat
 he snow-white foam was soaking through the caparisons.
 a every courtly fashion they sought to meet the Huns.

1883.

hen up and spake the minstrel, Volker the fiddle-player:
 I trow that to withstand us these warriors will not dare.
 've ever heard it said that they hate us verily;
 Now is the time to show it; a better ne'er will be.

1884.

'Straightway unto the stables," so Volker loudly cried,
 'We'll have the horses taken; till towards the eventide
 We'll ride some further courses, if there be time enow.
 What if to us Burgundians the queen some praise allow!"

1885.

Then saw they some one coming; with stately mien rode he,
 Such that no other Hunsman with him compared could be.
 Belike in some high lattice a sweetheart there he had;
 No knightly bride was ever than him more fairly clad.

1886.

Then Volker said: "How can I pass over such a chance?
 Yon darling of the ladies must feel a thrust of lance.
 There's not a man could help it! 'twill stand him in his stead;
 I care not though I anger thereby King Emel's will."

1887.

"For love of me, forbear ye!" King Gunther quickly spake;
"These people will upbraid us if we the onset make;
Let ye the Huns begin it, more seemly 'twere, I ween."
Now all this time King Etzel was sitting by the queen.

1888.

"I'll make the hubbub greater," quoth Hagen, in his turn;
"We needs must let the ladies and these same champions learn
How we can sit our horses: 'twill be good sport withal,
Though little praise to any of Gunther's men befall."

1889.

Then rode the ready Volker into the fray again:
Whereby had many a woman, ere long, right grievous pain.
The noble Hunsman's body transfix'd he with his spear;
Which soon both wife and maiden bewail'd with many a tear.

1890.

With hurtling speed did Hagen rush forward with his men,
His sixty chosen warriors; and quickly rode he then
Upon the fiddler's footsteps, to where the joust was held.
Both Etzel and Kriemhilda plainly the whole beheld.

1891.

The kings were all unwilling their minstrel brave to leave
Amid the foemen fighting, and succour none to give;
A thousand heroes therefore towards him deftly rode,—
In high-accomplish'd fashion they did whate'er they would.

1892.

That the noble Hunsman in death was stricken low,
And among his kinsmen complaints and cries of woe.
The folk were asking: "Who can this deed have done?"
Er, the fearless minstrel, yon fiddler is the one!"

1893.

or swords and bucklers called they, and held them soon in hand,
he kinsmen of this margrave of the Hungarian land.
hey would have set on Volker, and slain him where he stood;
the host ran from his window with all the haste he could.

1894.

Then rose a mighty tumult among the people all
The kings and their attendants dismounted at the hall;
Behind the throng his charger sent each Burgundian;
King Etzel came: to sever the nooses he began.

1895.

From one of the Hun's kinsmen, who chanced by him to stand,
He seiz'd a deadly weapon, and wrenched it from his hand;
Then drave the people backwards, for very wroth was he:
"How vain unto these warriors had been my courtesy

1896.

"If ye had slain the minstrel before my very face;"
So spake to them King Etzel: "that were a foul disgrace!
For well I marked him riding, what time he pierced the Hun,
And through no fault on his part, but by a slip, 'twas done.

1897.

"To leave my guests in freedom, I charge ye to take heed."
So gave he them safe-conduct; then led they every steed
Unto the hostel stables; and many squires they had
Right diligent in service, who did whate'er they bade.

1898.

The host into the palace took with his friends his way.
No wrath in any of them would he allow to stay.
The tables were made ready, the water was brought in:
Yet bitter foes in plenty had they from o'er the Rhine.

1899.

Ere all the lords were seated a good long time was spent ;
Whilst tortured was Kriemhilda by cares within her pent.
She said : " I seek thy counsel, O prince of Bern, thy grace
And aid : in sooth my business is now in evil case."

1900.

Then Hildebrand made answer, a worthy warrior he :
" Whoever slays the Niblungs shall have no help from me,
Nay, not for any treasure ! thereby he grief may get :
These knights of ready courage have ne'er been conquer'd yet."

1901.

And, in his courtly fashion, thereto Sir Dietrich spake :
" O mighty queen, I pray thee, thy purpose to forsake.
To me thy kinsmen never have done such injury,
That I the gallant warriors in combat would defy.

1902.

" The wish doth ill beseem thee, most noble prince's wife,
That thou anent thy kinsfolk wouldst plot against their life.
Trusting unto thy favour they came unto this land :
Siegfried is not avengéd by aid of Dietrich's hand."

1903.

When she could find no falseness the knight of Bern within,
Then on the spot she promised to give to Bloedelin
A far-extending march-land, which Nudung own'd of yore.
As Dankwart shortly slew him, he thought of it no more.

1904.

Quoth she : " Thou ought'st to aid me, my good Sir Bloedelin,
For in this very palace are now these foes of mine
Who slew my husband Siegfried, so well-beloved of me.
To him who helps avenge him, I ever bound shall be."

1485.

'O her then answer'd Bloedel: "Nay, be sure of this.
'O them, for fear of Etzel, I dare in naught advise.
Since he thy kinsmen hallow, is ever fain to see.
And did I aught to hurt them, he ne'er would pardon me."

1486.

'Nay, rather, my lord Bloedel, your friend I'll ever be.
Guerdon of gold and silver I will bestow on thee:
And eke a lovely damsel—Nutting's betrothed bride—
Whom thou mayst love and cherish right gladly at thy side."

1487.

"The land, too, and the castles, all mine thou shalt give;
So, noble knight, thou mayest in gladness ever live.
If thou but winn'st the erldom which Nutting held in fee,
Whate'er to-day I promise, in truth I'll give to thee."

1488.

When now the noble Bloedel the guerrier heard her tell,
And seeing that the damsel in beauty pleased him well,
By help of strife he purposed to earn this lovely wife:
But for that cause the warrior was bound to lose his life.

1489.

Unto the queen then spake he: "Within the hall go back,
Ere any guess my purpose, an answer I will make.
Hagen will have to answer for what to you he wrought;
King Gunther's man, I warrant, shall bound to you be brought."

1490.

"Now arm yourselves," cried Bloedel, "my gallant liegemen all;
We will upon the foemen within the hostel fall;
I may not be acquitted of this by Etzel's wife.
On this must every hero among us stake his life."

1911.

When the queen found that Bloedel was on the fray intent,
She tarried there no longer, but back to table went
And sat beside King Etzel and with his men as well :
She for the guests' undoing had taken counsel fell.

1912.

Since means there were not otherwise to cause the strife to start,
(Kriemhilda's olden sorrow lay graven in her heart)
She bade them bring to table King Etzel's little son :
How could a vengeful woman more cruelly have done ?

1913.

Then went that self-same minute of Etzel's liegemen four,
And thither from his chamber the young king Ortlieb bore
Unto the prince's table, where Hagen also sate.
(The boy was doom'd to perish through Hagen's deadly hate.)

1914.

As soon as mighty Etzel espied his little son,
He turned to his wife's kinsmen and spake in kindly tone :
"Now, my good friends, behold ye, my only son is he,
And eke your sister's offspring : which well for you may be.

1915.

"If he his kindred likens, he'll be a gallant wight,
Right powerful and noble, a well-grown man of might.
Should I live some while longer he'll own a dozen lands ;
So look ye for good service at my young Ortlieb's hands.

1916.

Therefore fain would pray you, O well-loved friends of mine,
If ye are homeward riding unto the river Rhine,
If ye upon the journey would take your sister's son,
And let your loving kindness unto the child be shown.

1917.

* And rear him up in honour till he to manhood grow.
If any in your borders hath wrought you any woe,
When he is of full stature he will your vengeance aid."
King Etzel's wife Kriemhilda heard also what he said.

1918.

"If unto days of manhood the child should grow and thrive,
These thanes, I trow," said Hagen, "their trust to him will give.
Yet the young king, meseemeth, is of a weakly sort:
Folk will not often see me attending Ortlieb's court."

1919.

The king look'd round at Hagen,— this speech had vext him
sore;
And though, with princely breeding, he spake thereof no more,
His heart was very heavy and troubled was his mind.
Nor was the mood of Hagen a whit to joy inclined.

1920.

The princes all were sorry, together with the king,
That of his child had Hagen e'er spoken such a thing.
With ill content they bore it: naught knew they of the case,
Nor what through this same warrior would shortly come to pass.

ADVENTURE XXXII.—HOW BLOEDELIN WAS SLAIN.

1921.

The warriors of Bloedel were ready for the fray;
Clad in their thousand hauberks they thither took their way.
Where Dankwart with his yeomen still at the table lay,
There rose between the heroes a strife of deadly fray.

1922.

As soon as the Lord Bloedel before the table went,
Dankwart the marshal met him on greeting due intent :
"Right welcome to our hostel, Lord Bloedelin, are ye,
Although I greatly marvel what may the reason be?"

1923.

"Thou hast no need to greet me," so answer'd Bloedelin :
"For this my coming bodeth an end to thee and thine,
Thanks to thy brother Hagen, who erewhile Siegfried slew.
That to the Huns thou'lt answer, and many another too."

1924.

"Nay, say not so, Lord Bloedel," the marshal Dankwart said :
"Else must we rue too quickly this journey we have made.
I was but a small stripling when Siegfried lost his life ;
I know not what against me bringeth King Etzel's wife."

1925.

"No more about the matter know I to say to you,
Save that your kinsmen did it, Gunther, and Hagen too.
Look to yourselves, ye lost ones, ye go not hence away !
By death must ye the forfeit unto Kriemhilda pay."

1926.

"What ! and will nothing turn you ?" cried Dankwart thereupon :
"Would I had ne'er besought you, that better were undone !"
Up from the table sprang he, the warrior swift and strong,
And drew a keen-edged weapon, that heavy was and long.

1927.

Therewith he struck at Bloedel, with stroke of sword so fleet,
That off his head was smitten, and lay before his feet.
"Be that thy wedding-dower," the warrior Dankwart said,
"Unto the bride of Nudung, whom thou wouldst woo and wed !"

1928.

'To-morrow they may plight her unto another one :
f he will earn the guerdon, the like to him be done !"
A faithful-hearted Hunsman Dankwart aware had made,
How that the queen against him such grievous plots had laid.

1929.

When now the men of Bloedel saw how their lord lay slain,
Then from the guests no longer their hands could they restrain.
With broadswords high uplifted they sprang in deadly mood
Upon the youthful warriors : which ere long many rued.

1930.

Then loudly shouted Dankwart unto his followers all :
" Well see ye, noble yeomen, how things are like to fall !
Ye hapless ones, be wary, in sooth there's need to be,
Albeit noble Kriemhild bade us right lovingly."

1931.

They to whom swords were lacking, reach'd down before each seat,
And many a long stool lifted from underneath their feet.
Then the Burgundian yeomen no longer would forbear,
And heavy stools made bruises through many a helmet there.

1932.

How grimly thus the strangers essay'd their lives to save !
And so the arm'd assailants from out the house they drave ;
Yet left they dead within it five hundred men or more :
And all of the defenders were red and wet with gore.

1933.

These tidings of disaster were carried presently
Unto the knights of Etzel (which grieved them bitterly) :
How Bloedel and his liegemen had all to death been brought,
Which deed had Hagen's brother with his retainers wrought.

1946.

From one side and the other, upon him hurtled they ;
Ay, some of them too quickly had come into the fray !
Before the foe upstood he, e'en as a woodland boar
At bay the sleuth-hounds faces : could valour e'er be more ?

1947.

His path was newly-sprinkled with life-blood warm and wet.
No single-handed warrior had ever striven yet
Against a host of foemen, as he had boldly done.
Folk mark'd how Hagen's brother to court right nobly won.

1948.

By sewers and by butlers was heard the clash of swords ;
From many a hand the liquors were flung upon the boards,
As were the victuals also which to the hall they bare.
And stalwart foes in plenty forestall'd him at the stair.

1949.

"What will ye now, ye sewers?" the weary warrior cried :
"In sooth for all the strangers, good cheer ye should provide,
And to the nobles ought ye good victuals to convey ;—
And to my well-lov'd masters let me my tidings say."

1950.

Whoe'er by force before him upon the stairway sprang,
On each of them so sorely his heavy sword he swang,
In very dread their safety further aloof they sought ;
And so his strength of body right mickle marvels wrought.

XXIII.] HOW THEY FOUGHT WITH THE HUNS.

ADVENTURE XXXIII.—HOW THE BURGUNDIANS
FOUGHT WITH THE HUNS.

1151

Within the door an entrance thus galant Dankwart took,
The household folk of Ekele in shame were to be took.
The whole of his apparel desperate I was with fire,
A mighty naked weapon within his hand he bore.

1152

Then loudly Dankwart shouted before the assembled throng,
"Bestir thee, brother Hagen, thou art at the wrong,
To thee and God in Heaven appear I in our need,
Yeomen and knights together be in the house need."

1153

And he cried back in answer: "And wilt thou more I fight?"
Quoth Dankwart: "The Lord Ekele, together with his knight,
But dearly hath he paid it, that would I have you know,
I smote his head from off him; mine own hand gave the blow."

1154

"'Tis but a little grievance," quoth Hagen if I thought;
"Whene'er one has occasion of any shame to get,
That he by hands of warrior was of his life fordone,
So much the less fair women for him have need to mourn."

1155

"Now tell me, brother Dankwart, why all so red ye be?
Methinks that thou art wounded and sufferst grievously.
If in the land he liveth who this on thee hath done,
Except the foul fiend save him, his life's as good as gone."

1956.

"You see me whole and hearty ; with blood my clothes are red,
But from the wounds of others it thus hath happenéd ;
And they have been so many that I have slain to-day,
That verily their number on oath I could not say."

1957.

He answer'd : " Brother Dankwart, see to the door do thou,
And let not of the Hunsmen a single man come through.
I'll reckon with these warriors, as need we have, in faith !
Our men-at-arms are lying in undeservéd death."

1958.

"If chamberlain I must be," the gallant man replied,
"To serve such mighty rulers, I am well satisfied.
I'll answer for the stairway, as honour's dear to me."
Unto Kriemhilda's warriors naught could more direful be.

1959.

"It is to me a marvel," Hagen thereafter spake :
"What meaneth all the fluster these Hunnish warriors make?
They think they well could spare him, who yonder door doth hold,
And hath these high concerns to the Burgundians told !

1960.

"Long time about Kriemhilda have I been wont to hear,
That she her bitter sorrow was not content to bear.
Now drink we to her darling ! for royal wine we'll call !
The princeling of the Hunfolk shall be the first of all !"

1961.

'Then the child Ortlieb slew he, Hagen, that warrior good,
So that from sword-blade downward flow'd o'er his hands the
blood ;
'The infant's head was sever'd and on the queen's lap fell.
'Then rose amongst the warriors a slaughter horrible.

1962.

With double-handed sword-stroke he dealt a blow at large
Against the man of learning, who had the child in charge.
His head all in a moment before the table lay :
In good sooth for the teacher it was but sorry pay !

1963.

He saw by Etzel's table a certain minstrel-man,
And Hagen in his fury to fall on him began ;
His left hand on the fiddle he lopp'd off suddenly :
" There 's somewhat thou canst carry for news to Burgundy ! "

1964.

" Woe for my hand ! " cried Werbel the minstrel : " wilt thou say
What evil I have done thee, Lord Hagen of Tronjé ?
In all good faith I journey'd unto your master's land ;
The notes how can I finger since I have lost my hand ? "

1965.

But little heeded Hagen, though he ne'er fiddled more.
He wreak'd within the palace a vengeance grim and sore
Upon the knights of Etzel, of whom a host he slew.
Death dealt he in the palace to people not a few.

1966.

The ever-ready Volker up from the table sprang :
And in his hand right loudly his fiddle-bow outrang.
Right fearsome was the music that Gunther's minstrel play'd ;
Ay ! 'mid the gallant Hunsmen what enemies he made !

1967.

Upsprang, too, from the table, the noble rulers three :
They gladly would have stay'd it, ere mischief worse should be.
But all their wit avail'd not the rising storm to quell,
When Volker joining Hagen to such wild raving fell.

1968.

When saw the Lord of Rhineland the fight could not be stay'd,
The prince himself fought also, and many a wide wound made
Upon his foemen's bodies, their shining mail-coats through.
A hand-strong hero was he : as now all grimly knew.

1969.

The stalwart Gernot likewise was forward in the strife ;
Ay ! he among the Hunsmen took many a hero's life,
A keen-edged weapon wielding,— by Rüdiger 'twas given.
By him were Etzel's warriors right grievously bedriven.

1970.

The young son of Dame Uté into the fight now dash'd,
And gloriously his broadsword right through the helmets
crash'd,—
To grief of Etzel's warriors of the Hungarian land.
There wrought were many marvels by gallant Gis'lher's hand.

1971.

Howe'er the kings and liegemen were valiant in the fight,
Above them all right plainly did Giselher in might
Stand forth against the foemen ; he was a hero good.
Such wounds he dealt, that many fell weltering in their blood.

1972.

The men of Etzel also stood stoutly to the foe.
There one might see the strangers go hacking to and fro
With their bright glancing weapons, all through the royal hall.
And horrid shrieks from all sides upon the ear did fall.

1973.

They who were on the outside would to their friends within ;
But found that at the doorways small vantage they could win.
Out from the hall right gladly would they within it fare :
But none of them would Dankwart let up or down the stair.

1974.

Thereby around the gateways a mighty press arose,
 And din of helmets also beneath the broadsword blows.
 And thus the gallant Dankwart fell into sore distress :
 But that his brother heeded, as bound in faithfulness.

1975.

For thereupon to Volker Sir Hagen cried aloud :
 "Now look you yonder, comrade, how round my brother crowd
 The Hunnish warriors closely, and blows upon him rain :
 Friend, go and help my brother, or we shall lose the thane."

1976.

"That will I do full surely," answer'd the minstrelman ;
 And straightway through the palace his fiddling he began.
 His hand with his stout broadsword full often music made ;
 To him the Rhenish warriors unbounded thanks repaid.

1977.

And soon the gallant Volker to Dankwart came and said :
 "To-day no little trouble hath fallen on your head.
 Your brother hath enjoin'd me to lend a helping hand :
 If you'll look to the outside, within the door I'll stand."

1978.

Dankwart the ever-ready without the gateway stood ;
 Well guarded he the stairway, let any come who would.
 One heard the clang of weapons in the bold hero's hand.
 The like, within, did Volker of the Burgundian land.

1979.

Loudly the valiant minstrel shouted across the throng :
 "The hall is closed, friend Hagen, with bolt and barrier strong.
 The door of Etzel's chamber is safely barr'd as well :
 Two heroes' hands that hold it a thousand bolts excel."

1980.

When Hagen, Lord of Tronjé, knew that the door was fast,
 His shield back on his shoulders the goodly chieftain cast.
 * First fell he to avenging the ills upon him wrought :
 Of longer life his foemen had then but little thought.

1981.

The Prince of Bern no sooner had seen how matters went,
 And how the mighty Hagen so many helmets rent,
 Than sprang the Amelung ruler upon a bench : quoth he :
 " The liquor Hagen giveth is vile as drink can be ! "

1982.

The host was full of sorrow— good cause had he to rue :
 What friends of him belovéd before his eyes they slew !
 And hardly from his foemen unscath'd himself came he ;
 In grief he sat—what profit was it a king to be ?

1983.

The mighty Queen Kriemhilda to Dietrich call'd and said :
 " With all your manhood give me, O noble knight, your aid,
 By all those princes' merits erewhile of Amelung land :
 Should Hagen once have reach'd me, my death were close at
 hand."

1984.

" And how am I to help you," Lord Dietrich answering said,
 " Great queen, when I have reason myself to be afraid ?
 These followers of Gunther with wrath so sorely burn,
 That I with no one's safety can now myself concern."

1985.

" Nay, say not so, Lord Dietrich, thou noble knight and good,
 This day make plain to all men thy kind and virtuous mood,
 Thou hence wilt help me : or I am like to die."
 And brought Kriemhilda to sore anxiety.

1986.

Can I do ought to help you, I verily will try :
nce never have I witness'd, for many years gone by,
o such deep wrath enkindled so many a warrior good
y! through the riven helmets I see the surging blood."

1987.

his thane of proven valour with power began to show
like unto horn of bison his voice rang loudly out
ntil its strength re-echoed the wide-wall'd stronghold round
he mightiness of Dietrich was great beyond all bound.

1988.

When Gunther heard the clamour proceeding from the main
above the noise of battle, to hearken he began
aid he: "The voice of Dietrich is to my hearing plain
trow that our retainers some friend of his have slain.

1989.

"I see him on the table, he beckons with his hand
Ye friends of mine and kinsfolk from the Burgundian land
Cease fighting for a season, and let me hear and see
What to the thane hath happen'd through them who follow me."

1990.

And when the royal Gunther besought and gave command
They, in the stress of battle halted with sword in hand
So great the power he wielded nor one durst strike a blow
Whilst him of Bern he challenged with readiness grew

1991.

Said he: "Most noble Dietrich what hath to you won here
By any of my people? I'm willing for a sword
Amends and satisfaction their ready to give
Were any man to wrong you their lesson to give."

1992.

Then answer'd the Lord Dietrich : " Naught hath been done to
me ;

But let me leave the palace with your safe-conduct free,
And get with my retainers from this fell strife away :
For that I'll owe you service assuredly for aye."

1993.

Then unto him spake Wolfhart : " Why ask ye grace so soon?
That door, I trow, the fiddler hath not so closely done
But we can force it open enough to get away."
" Now hold thy peace," cried Dietrich, " the devil thou dost play."

1994.

Then spake the royal Gunther : " That will I let you do.
Out of this place depart ye, many be ye or few,
But not a single foeman— here stay they everyone.
They have anent these Hunsfolk so basely to me done."

1995.

When Dietrich heard that saying, he took beneath his arm
The noble queen, sore stricken with sorrow and alarm.
Upon his other arm he took Etzel with him then ;
There also went with Dietrich six hundred goodly men.

1996.

Then up and spake the margrave, the noble Rüdeger :
" If any from the palace be yet allowed to fare,
Who still are fain to serve you, to us let it be known :
For thus may peace enduring betwixt good friends be sown."

1997.

Whereto made answer Gis'lher, of the Burgundian land :
" To you shall peace and pardon be granted at our hand,
Since you and your retainers were e'er of faithful heart.
You all shall, unmolested, hence with your friends depart."

1998.

When Rüdeger the margrave departed from the hall,
 Five hundred men went with him or more, belike, in all,
 Who came from Bechelaren, liegemen and friends as well ;
 By whom unto King Gunther great mischief soon befell.

1999.

Meanwhile a Hunnish warrior, who saw how Etzel went
 By Dietrich's side, to profit thereby was all intent ;
 But with his sword the minstrel fetch'd at him such a slice,
 That at the feet of Etzel his head lay in a trice.

2000.

When that the country's ruler had got outside the place,
 He stopp'd and look'd behind him towards where Volker was :
 " Woe 's me for this dread stranger ; a cruel destiny
 It is that all my warriors must dead before him lie !

2001.

" And woe upon this feasting," the noble sovran cried,
 " For one, by name of Volker, is fighting there inside
 Like to a savage boar, and yet a minstrel he !
 I thank my Lord and Saviour I'm from that devil free !

2002.

" Right evil sound his measures, his strokes are bloody red ;
 Ay, and his tunes have smitten full many a hero dead.
 I know not what against us this minstrel doth attest,
 For never have I harbour'd so downright ill a guest !"

2003.

They'd let from out the palace as many as they chose ;
 Then from the folk within it a fearful din arose.
 The guests for what had happen'd a dire revenge would have.
 Ay ! Volker the undaunted, what helmets then he clave !

2004.

Gunther, the noble ruler, turn'd at that noise around :
"Hear'st thou yon music, Hagen, which Volker there doth
sound
Amid the Hunfolk fiddling, who through the door would go?
He hath a blood-red straker upon his fiddle-bow!"

2005.

"It grieves me beyond measure," Hagen in answer spake,
"That I before that warrior a seat in hall should take.
I have been his companion, as he was likewise mine,
And we shall aye be faithful if hence we ever win.

2006.

"Now mark, great king, how Volker doth thee and thine uphold!
Right willingly he earneth thy silver and thy gold.
Through steel of hardest temper his fiddle-bow will smite;
He breaks from off the helmets their shining crests and bright.

2007.

"I never saw a fiddler so nobly hold his own
As this same warrior Volker throughout the day hath done.
On helmet and on buckler his music ringeth clear :
A gallant horse deserves he and raiment rich to wear."

2008.

Of those of Hunnish kindred who had been in that hall,
Not one was left within it alive amongst them all.
Now silenced was the uproar; for none there were to fight:
Aside was laid the weapon of every gallant knight.

ADVENTURE XXXIV.—HOW THEY CAST FORTH
THE DEAD.

2009.

Down sat the knights and nobles, by all their labours spent ;
Before the hall together Volker and Hagen went.
These warriors over-weary lean'd on their shields for rest ;
The while betwixt the couple pass'd many a ready jest.

2010.

Then Giselher, the warrior from Burgundy, outspake :
“ Dear friends, ye must in no wise seek yet your rest to take :
The dead folk must ye carry straight from the house away.
There'll be another onset, that can I surely say.

2011.

“ Beneath our feet 'tis needful they should no longer lie.
And ere by storm the Hunsmen undo us utterly,
Some wounds we yet will give them, e'en as I love to do ;
For firmly am I minded,” said Giselher, “ thereto.”

2012.

“ Well's me for such a master,” said Hagen, thereunto ;
“ From none such rede were likely, save from a warrior true,
As we from my young master this very day have had :
I trow all ye Burgundians may therefore be right glad.”

2013.

Then follow'd they his counsel, and carried through the door
Dead warriors seven thousand and cast them therebefore.
At foot of the hall stairway they fell upon the ground ;
Then rose a doleful wailing from all their kinsmen round

2014.

Some few there were among them whose wounds were not so bad
But that with gentler usage they yet might life have had,
Who from that height down falling in death must needs lie low ;
For this their friends were wailing and grievous was their woe.

2015.

Then spake the fiddler Volker, a goodly hero he :
" Now witness I the truth of what hath been told to me :
Base cowards are these Hunsmen, they wail like womankind !
These sorely wounded bodies they ought to tend and bind."

2016.

Then deem'd a certain margrave he spake with purpose good.
He saw one of his kinsmen who lay amid the blood,
And clasp'd his arms about him and sought to drag him thence ;
Then shot the ruthless minstrel and slew him with a lance.

2017.

And when the others saw it, a panic seized the crowd ;
They all against the minstrel began to curse aloud.
Then pluck'd he up a javelin, that temper'd was and keen,
Which by some Hun or other aim'd at himself had been.

2018.

This, right across the fortress, he cast with might and main
Far o'er the crowd of people ; and thereby Etzel's men
He warn'd to take their station more distant from the hall.
The folk his mighty prowess now dreaded above all.

2019.

Yet still before the palace stood many a thousand men.
Sir Volker and Sir Hagen began to parley then,
And unto the King Etzel all in their minds to tell :
How grievous ills thereafter those heroes bold befell.

2020.

"To give the people courage," quoth Hagen, "is but right
 That ever should the nobles be foremost in the fight.
 Not otherwise my masters have here been seen to do
 They hew right through the helmets, blood flows at every blow."

2021.

So valiant was Etzel, he straightway gripp'd his shield
 "Now prithee be thou wary," said to him Dame Kriemhild
 "Offer unto thy warriors gold overflowing,
 If Hagen yonder reach thee, death will be right to them."

2022.

So bold a man the king was, he was not to be scared —
 The like of such great princes can seldom now be found
 Needs must they by his shield-strap to draw him backward fly
 Again the savage Hagen spake to him scoffing:

2023.

"It was a far-fetch'd kinship," the warrior Hagen said
 "That Etzel and Sir Siegfried to one another tied
 He was Kriemhilda's lover ere she set eyes on thee,
 Thou coward king! why shouldst thou take counsel with the dead?"

2024.

To him so speaking hearken'd the noble woman's wife
 Thereon within Kriemhilda was evil humour rise,
 That he should dare upbraid her in face of Etzel's men;
 Against the guests began she therefore to plot again.

2025.

"Who Hagen, Lord of Tronjé, will do to death," she said,
 "And hither at my bidding will bring to me his head,
 For him the shield of Etzel I'll fill with ruddy gold,
 And give him lands for guerdon, and goodly burghs to hold."

2026.

"Now truly," quoth the minstrel, "I know not what they lack
I never yet saw heroes so sluggishly hang back
When one hath heard them offer'd so noble a reward :
From this time forth can Etzel ne'er hold them in regard.

2027.

"Of those who vilely batten upon their prince's bread
And now are fain to shun him in his most pressing need,
Of such here mark I many who would be reckon'd brave,
And stand like very cravens : shame must they ever have !"

ADVENTURE XXXV.—HOW IRING WAS SLAIN.

2028.

Thereon the margrave Iring, who came from Denmark, cried :
"I have in all my doings on honour long relied,
And in the people's battles oft gain'd the mastery :
Now bring to me my weapons ; Hagen I will defy !"

2029.

"'Gainst that will I take counsel," Hagen in answer cried ;
"So bid these Hunnish warriors stand further yet aside ;
If two or three among ye should rush into this hall,
Back down the stairs disabled I'll send them, one and all !"

2030.

"For that I'll not forego it," said Iring, answering,
"I have ere this attempted as troublesome a thing.
With sword in hand against thee I'll hold my own alone ;
'boots thy haughty bearing that thou in words hast shown ?"

2031.

Then quickly in his armour thane Iring was y-clad.
With Irnfried of Thuringia, a bold and gailant lad.
And eke the stalwart Haward, with full a thousand men :
Whatever part was Iring's, that would they all mainmain.

2032.

The fiddler saw them coming— a very host they were—
In arms along with Iring, to set upon him there.
On head, well-fasten'd, wore they right many a helmet good.
Then wax'd the gallant Volker wrathful enough in mood.

2033.

"Now dost thou see, friend Hagen, how Iring yonder goes,
Who swore that thee in sword-fight he singly would oppose?
Doth falsehood fit a hero? Him I misprize therefore ;
He brings with him in armour a thousand men or more."

2034.

"Now call me not a liar," the liege of Haward said,
"I'm ready to accomplish what I have promised ;
For fear of no man living will I my word disown :
How dread so e'er be Hagen, I'll stand to him alone."

2035.

Then Iring begg'd his kinsmen and followers, at their feet,
That they would let him singly in fight the warrior meet.
Unwillingly they yielded, for well enough to them
Was known the haughty Hagen, from Burgundy who came.

2036.

Yet he so long besought them, that 'twas at last agreed.
For when his people saw him so bent upon the deed,
And that he strove for honour, they could but let him go ;
Thereon a grim encounter befell betwixt the two.

2061.

But brook'd not the thane Hagen to stay for his advance ;—
He ran full speed towards him, with blows of sword and lance
Until he reach'd the stairs' foot : his wrath was fierce and dread
And all the strength of Iring stood him in little stead.

2062.

They slash'd right through the bucklers, till each of them began
With ruddy fire to sparkle. And ere long Haward's man
By the broadsword of Hagen was desperately smit
Through shield and armour : never mote he get well of it.

2063.

When that the chieftain Iring was of the wound aware,
His shield unto his helm-band he raised, to rest it there.
He thought that with this damage he now had got his fill :
The liegeman of King Gunther had more to give him still.

2064.

Before his feet did Hagen a javelin espy ;
And with it straight at Iring, the Danish chief, let fly,—
So well, that from his forehead the shaft thereof stuck out.
For him the warrior Hagen a cruel end had wrought.

2065.

Iring must needs betake him the Danish folk unto ;
But ere they loosed the helmet from off the chief, they drew
Out from his head the lance-shaft ; then death to him came nigh.
His kinsfolk all were wailing : well might they, verily.

2066.

Then came the queen towards him, and over him she leant,
And for the stalwart Iring gave to her sorrow vent ;
She wept, his wounds beholding, and bitter was her grief.
Then spake unto his kinsmen that brave and gallant chief :

2067.

I pray thee stint thy weeping, most noble lady mine,
 or what avails thy sorrow? I ~~must~~ my life resign
 because of wounds and damage that have been dealt on me.
 No more will death allow me ~~Ever~~ to serve and thee."

2068.

Then unto the Thuringians and to the Danes he spake:
 "The gifts that ye were promised no hand of yours shall take
 from yonder royal lady,— her ruby gold so bright:
 Death's visage must ye look on, if ye with Hagen fight."

2069.

All pallid was his colour, the seal of death he bore,—
 The ever-valiant Iring,— to them 'twas sorrow sore.
 For Haward's gallant liegeman there was no hope of life:
 And so the men of Denmark most forward go to stride.

2070.

Irnfried as well as Haward sprang forth the hall before
 With warriors a thousand; a horrible uproar
 On every side resounded, mighty and clamouring.
 And ah, at the Burgundians what lances sharp they fling!

2071.

And then the gallant Irnfried straight for the minstrel made,
 At whose right hand redoubted great injury he had.
 For lo, the noble fiddler the landgrave sore did smite
 Through firmly-fasten'd helmet: he was a grewsome wight!

2072.

And thereupon Sir Irnfried the valiant minstrel smote
 Till rents perforce were riven across his ring-wrought coat,
 And all his breast-plate quiver'd with sparks of fiery red:
 Albeit fell the landgrave before the fiddler dead.

A A

2073.

Anon were met together Haward and Hagen bold,
 I wot that whoso saw them a marvel might behold !
 From hand of either hero the sword-strokes follow'd free ;
 Foredoom'd to die was Haward by him of Burgundy.

2074.

When Danesmen and Thuringians their leaders saw in death,
 Then rose a frightful struggle the palace walls beneath,
 Or ever they the gateway by might and main had won :
 Full many a shield and helmet were shatter'd and fordone.

2075.

"Give way !" then shouted Volker, "and let them all come
 through—
 What they would fain accomplish they can in nowise do.
 In but a short time after they're bound to die within,
 And what the queen hath promised by dying they can win."

2076.

Now when these haughty chieftains within the chamber went,
 Of many a one amongst them the head was lowly bent,
 For by their rapid sword-blows to perish he was fain.
 Well fought the gallant Gernot, and Giselher the thane.

2077.

There got within the palace a thousand men and four ;
 One saw their flashing falchions as through the air they tore.
 Of all who came within it soon every warrior fell.
 One might of the Burgundians full many a marvel tell.

2078.

Thereafter was a silence, and all the uproar died.
 While, out of hole and crevice, blood flow'd on every side
 And ran into the gutters from all the corpses there.
 and the men of Rhineland wrought by their prowess rare.

2079.

hen sat they down to rest them, those men of Burgundy,
 heir weapons and their buckles they presently laid by,
 let still the gallant fiddler before the palace stay'd.
 a case that any other to fight with him essay'd.

2080.

he king lamented sorely, as likewise did his wife,
 and maids and matrons also away were of life,
 ween that Death had taken all path to do them ill.
 Whence, by the guests to perish were many warriors still.

5:

ADVENTURE XXXVI.—HOW THE QUEEN LAID THAT THE HALL BE SET ON FIRE.

2081.

"Now do ye off your helmets," quoth Hagen, the bold knight,
 "For I and my companion will guard ye all aright.
 And should the men of Etzel a fresh attack essay,
 So will I warn my masters with all the speed I may."

2082.

The head was then uncover'd of many a warrior good;
 They sat upon the fallen, who lay there steep'd in blood.
 And had to death been smitten so lately by their hand.
 By many evil glances the noble guests were scann'd.

2083.

Before the fall of evening the king his measures took,—
 The queen thereto assenting,— that with some better luck
 The Hunnish knights might venture. Full twenty thousand men
 Were seen before him standing: to battle must they,

2084.

Thereon with furious onslaught the strangers were attack'd.
And Dankwart, Hagen's brother, a man right swift to act,
Sprang from his lords, the foemen before the door to rout;—
It seem'd that he must perish, but safely gat he out.

2085.

The deadly struggle lasted till stay'd it was by night.
As well became good heroes, the guests maintain'd the fight
Against the men of Etzel one whole long summer day.
And ah, what gallant warriors about them dying lay!

2086.

'Twas at the summer solstice this slaughter great befell,
Whereby the Dame Kriemhilda avenged her heart-ache well
Upon her nearest kinsfolk and many another wight.
From that time royal Etzel knew nevermore delight.

2087.

The day for them was ended in great anxiety.
It seem'd to them 'twere better a speedy death to die,
Than linger there, awaiting some dread, unheard-of pain.
Therefore the haughty warriors to beg a truce were fain.

2088.

The king, by word, besought they to come unto them there.
These heroes, blood-bespatter'd and soil'd with armour-wear,
From out the palace follow'd the noble kings all three;
They knew not to what hearer to plead their misery.

2089.

Both Etzel and Kriemhilda came thither them before.
The land was their possession: their host grew more and more.
The king spake to the strangers: "Say, what will ye of me?
- ve would be granted? Such thing can hardly be

2090.

After such insult grievous as ye on me have cast,
 Nor shall ye profit by it if life for me should last)
 My child, that ye have slain me, and many of my kin.
 Peace and atonement, surely, ye cannot hope to win : ”

2091.

Whereto made answer Gunther : “ By dire need we were led.
 My people all were lying before thy heroes dead
 Within the hostel yonder : what pretext did I lend ?
 To thee in good faith came I, I thought thou wert my friend . ”

2092.

Then Giselher, the youngest of the Burgundian three :
 “ Ye chiefs,” cried he, “ of Etzel, who living yet may be,
 How have I wrong'd ye, warriors ? In what am I to blame ?
 Unto this country riding in kindly mood I came . ”

2093.

They answer'd : “ Every city throughout the land with woe
 Is fill'd through this thy kindness. Ay, glad were we, I trow,
 If thou hadst ne'er come hither from Worms beyond the Rhine.
 The country thou hast orphan'd, with brothers twain of thine . ”

2094.

Thereon, in wrathful humour, Gunther the warrior spake :
 “ If of this bitter hatred an ending ye would make
 With us, unhappy strangers, 'twere better for us both !
 'Tis for no fault on our part what Etzel to us doth . ”

2095.

Then to the guests the host said : “ Your troubles and my own
 Are nowise to be liken'd. The burden on me thrown
 Of shame and loss together which I have had to bear ;—
 For 'his not one among you hence with his life . ”

2096.

Thereon the stalwart Gernot made answer to the king :
"So then may God incline you to do a friendly thing !
An ye must slay us strangers, then let us come to you
From here unto the open. Thus honour bids you do.

2097.

"Whate'er to us may happen, be it done out of hand !
So many whole men have ye who us will dare withstand,
That none of us, strife-weary, alive they'll let away.
For how long are we warriors in this distress to stay ?"

2098.

The warriors of Etzel would have agreed thereto
That they outside the palace be granted leave to go.
But when Kriemhilda heard it, sorely aggrieved was she.
Then for the outcast strangers no hope of peace could be.

2099.

"Nay, nay, ye Hunnish warriors, the thing ye have in thought,—
In good faith I advise ye— see that ye do it not.
These murder-wreaking fellows let not without the hall,
Else shall right deadly sorrows upon your kinsmen fall.

2100.

"Though not another living save Uté's sons there were—
These same, my noble brothers— and they but to the air
Came out to cool their hauberks, your hope were all forlorn ;—
More valiant warriors never into this world were born."

2101.

Then Giselher, the youngest, said : "Fairest sister mine,
Nigh ill I did to trust you, when from beyond the Rhine
 his land thou bad'st me into this direful strait.
 ve I from the Hunsfolk deserved this cruel fate ?

2102.

To thee I e'er was faithful, I never did thee hurt.
 And on the understanding I hither rode to court
 That thou, most noble sister, wert well-disposed to me.
 Be merciful towards us: not otherwise can it be."

2103.

"I cannot show you mercy: unmerciful am I.
 For me hath Treuzen Hagen wrought as much misery.
 It may not be atoned for as long as I have life.
 Ye all must pay the forfeit:" so answer'd Hagen's wife.

2104.

"Yet will ye Hagen only to me as hostage give.
 I will not say for certain I may not let you live—
 Seeing ye are my brothers and of one mother bred—
 Then with these cities assembled I may of pardon need."

2105.

"Now God in Heaven forefend it!" Gernot in answer said.
 "Were there a thousand of us, we sooner all were dead—
 Though of thy kin and kindred— ere we gave in to thee
 A single man as hostage: nay, that can never be."

2106.

"Then are we doom'd to perish!" made answer Giseher.
 "Yet none shall dare deprive us of any laughing gear.
 Here, as before, abide we, would any us assail.
 For never any comrade did I in fealty fail."

2107.

Then spake the gallant Dankwart (by him 'twas meedily done)
 "In sooth my brother Hagen standeth not yet alone!
 They who a truce deny us may yet have cause
 Of that we'll make you certain,— take ye my

2108.

The queen spake to her warriors : "Ye men of courage high,
Go closer to the stairway, avenge mine injury !
Then will I be your debtor, as I by all means should.
I would requite on Hagen his overweening mood.

2109.

"Let no man leave the palace, I charge ye above all ;
I will, at the four corners, have fire set to the hall :
So all the wrongs I've suffer'd right well avenged shall be."
The warriors of Etzel were ready speedily.

2110.

Those that without were standing they drave the hall within
By smiting and by shooting ; and fearful was the din.
Yet never would the princes their faithful men forsake ;
Their fealty to each other could neither of them break.

2111.

Then Etzel's wife gave bidding to set alight the hall.
And so with fire were tortured those warriors' bodies all.
Caught by the wind, the palace was presently aflame ;
I ween that people never to such dire anguish came.

2112.

"Oh, woe upon this horror !" cried many a one inside :
"For us it had been better had we in battle died.
May God have pity on us ! lost evermore are we !
On us the queen her anger now wreaks infernally."

2113.

Quoth one within the palace : "Needs must we all lie dead !
What profits us the greeting that from the king we had ?
The burning heat so sorely with thirst doth torture me,
I trow that in this torment my life will quickly flee."

2114.

Then Hagen spake, of Tronjé: "Ye noble knights and good,
Whoe'er by thirst is troubled may quench it here with blood.
In heat like this 'tis better than wine of any kind,
And at this time, moreover, no better may ye find."

2115.

So went one of the warriors to where a corpse he found:
He knelt to where the wound was, his helmet he unbound,
And then he fell to drinking the oozing stream of blood;
Unused as he was to it, he thought it passing good.

2116.

"Requite thee God, Sir Hagen," that man so weary spake,
"Seeing that thou hast taught me so well my thirst to slake!
A better wine right seldom hath been pour'd out for me.
Live I for some while longer, I'll aye be bound to thee."

2117.

The rest being told about it, and how he found it good,
Then were there many others who also drank the blood.
Thereby each one among them began to gain new life—
In dear ones it was paid for by many a goodly wife.

2118.

Within the hall about them the sparks fell thick around,
Upon their shields they caught them and turn'd them to the
ground.
The fire and smoke together distress'd them terribly.
I trow that heroes never felt greater misery.

2119.

Then Tronian Hagen shouted: "**Stand** closer to the wall!
Let not the burning embers upon your helm-bands fall,
But in the blood more deeply tread them with your feet—
That feast the queen but made us a sorry treat!"

2120.

In such distressful doings the night to ending wore,
And still the gallant minstrel kept watch the house before
With Hagen his companion ; upon their shields they leant,
From Etzel's folk awaiting some further detriment.

2121.

Then spake the fiddle-player : " Now go we to the hall :
So shall the Huns imagine that each of us and all
Have perish'd in this torture that hath on us been done ;
Yet shall they see us meet them, in battle, everyone."

2122.

Then Giselher, the youngest of the Burgundians, spake :
" A cool wind is arising, I trow the day will break.
Now grant us, God of Heaven, on better times to fall !
For us my sister Kriemhild hath made ill festival."

2123.

Then spake there yet another : " The dawning I can see ;
And since for us naught better is ever like to be,
Do on your armour, heroes ; see to your safety all ;—
King Etzel's wife, I doubt not, will quickly on us fall."

2124.

The host might well imagine that all the guests were slain
By dint of all their labours, or by the fiery pain ;
Yet still of them were living six hundred gallant wights,
Than whom no king whatever had any better knights.

2125.

They who the strangers guarded had fail'd not to espy
That still the guests were living, in spite of injury
And pains that had befallen the lords and liegemen too ;
Quite sound they saw them pacing the chamber to and fro.

2106.

It was told unto Kriemhilda that they were all arrayed,
 Whereto the queen made answer: "I ne'er was possible
 That through the fiery tournament any of them have liv'd;
 I'd rather take for granted that all of them is dead."

2107.

The princes and their liegemen were too tough to let
 Had anyone been willing merry to them to give.
 None could they find of any within the Hunnons land
 So to avenge their dying they sought with willing hand.

2108.

Towards the dawn of morning they had for purpose set
 A dire assault of battle: in straits the armies met.
 Though thickly all amongst them stout avengers were armed,
 The brave and noble warriors like the angels had they seem'd.

2109.

The zeal of Etzel's people was muchest to be seen,
 That they from Queen Kriemhilda might earn the golden ring.
 Moreover they were eager to let the king's commandment
 And so no few among them found speedy death at hand.

2110.

Of promising and giving might wondrous tales be told,
 She bade her folk on bucklers to bring the victory god.
 She gave to all who craved it and would accept her lot,
 Ay! ne'er was greater guerdon spent for an enemy.

2111.

A mighty force of warriors came in their panoply,
 To them cried gallant Volker: "Here waiting will we be!
 I ne'er saw knights more gladly go forth to the foe,
 Than these who the king's bounty have."

2132.

Then many of them shouted : "Come nigh, ye heroes, pray,
That we may have our ending,— ay, come without delay !
Here none there are remaining but have been doom'd to die !
With shafts one saw their bucklers all bristling speedily.

2133.

What have I more to tell you ? A good twelve hundred men
Made onset sore upon them, again and yet again.
The strangers cool'd their fury by wounding many a one—
No truce could be between them ; one saw the life blood run

2134.

From wounds of deadly deepness ; and many were there slain ;
And every man among them one heard for friends complain.
The mighty king and noble lost all his bravest there,
For whom their loving kinsfolk sore sorrow had to bear.

ADVENTURE XXXVII.—HOW THE MARGRAVE RÜDEGER WAS SLAIN.

2135.

The strangers, until morning, right gallantly had done.
By then Gotlinda's husband unto the court had gone,
And, looking round on all sides, he saw such horrors there
As moved to inward weeping true-hearted Rüdeger.

2136.

"Woe's me," then said the warrior, "that e'er I saw the day !
To think that none availeth this misery to stay !
Peace would I make gladly, the king will ne'er agree,
and more he dwelleth upon his injury."

2137.

Good Rüdiger inquiring straightway to Dietrich went,
 If they might make between them the noble king's men.
 But he of Bern made answer: "Who could such matters?
 King Etzel wills that no one should come between the two."

2138.

Now by a Hunnish warrior, Sir Rüdiger was seen
 With eyes bedimmed with weeping, as they for long had been.
 Unto the queen then stalked he: "Now look how miserable he—
 The man who hath with Etzel the most authority."

2139.

"And who hath at his service the people and the land,
 How many a castle is there in Rüdiger's command,
 Of which, through the king's bounty, no few he hath I know
 Yet hath he in this struggle ne'er struck a worthy blow."

2140.

"Methinks he little recketh if things go well or ill,
 As long as he hath all things according to his will.
 'Tis said that he is braver than other men might be,
 But that, in all this trouble, hath been full hard to see."

2141.

The warrior true-hearted, with downcast mood and grim,
 Gave heed unto the speaker. The hero look'd on him.
 And thought: "This shalt thou pay for! Thou say'st I am afraid."
 Thou hast at court thy story somewhat too loudly said."

2142.

His fists to clench began he, and at him straight he ran,
 And smote to such good purpose upon that Hunnish man
 That lifeless on the instant him at his feet he laid.
 But thus King's Etzel's troubles were all the greater made.

2143.

"Away with thee, base scoundrel!" thereon said Rüdeger;
"Of trouble and of sorrow I have enough to bear!
If I refrain from fighting, why tauntest me for that?
In sooth I have good reason to bear the strangers hate,

2144.

"And all that strength avail'd me I had against them wrought,
Were't not that I the warriors myself have hither brought.
'Twas I, in sooth, who led them into my master's land:
I cannot raise against them, therefore, my luckless hand."

2145.

Then answer to the margrave the great King Etzel made:
"O Rüdeger most noble, how hast thou lent us aid!
So many dead already we in the land must own,
No more of them were needed! much evil hast thou done."

2146.

The noble knight made answer: "The fellow made me wroth
By casting up against me the wealth and honour both
That by thy hands so freely have been bestow'd on me:
The liar got his guerdon a whit unluckily."

2147.

Now came the queen unto them, who eke had plainly seen
What, through the hero's anger, the Hun's reward had been.
Beyond all bounds complain'd she; tears from her eyes she shed,
To Rüdeger thus spake she: "How have we merited

2148.

"That you the king's misfortune and mine make all the more?
At all times, noble Rüdeger, you promised heretofore
You would in our service risk honour and eke life.
And the knights award you the meed in many a stri

The goodwill that you have shown me
 When me you first did see
 To wit, that you would have me
 And ne'er had I, your will

Try that thou speak to me
 That I for thee would have
 To lose my soul, I would
 Brought thee to the same

"O Rüdiger," he answered,
 And eke thine own life
 Wouldst cease to be
 Then said to her the knight

Then likewise might I have
 And on their knees I lay
 Then seem'd the knight to say
 The ever faithful knight

"Now God have pity on me
 Henceforward all mine might
 My truth and word I bring
 Woe on me, God be witness

"Whichever side I part from
 I shall have acted basely
 But if from both I sever,
 May He vouchsafe to guide me

2155.

Yet still they urged him straitly, the king and eke his wife.
Thence came it many a warrior ere long must lose his life
By Rüdeger's achieving ; till eke that hero fell.
Now of his direful doing I must the story tell.

2156.

He knew how this must evil and fearful sorrow bring,
And liefer would he therefore denial to the king,
And eke the queen, have given : full sorely fear'd he that
If e'er a guest he slaughter'd, the world would bear him hate.

2157.

Unto the king then spake he— that man of spirit bold :
“ Lord king, take back whatever from thee I have and hold,
Both land and burghs : with neither will I have aught to do,
But on my feet departing, will into exile go.”

2158.

Then spake the royal Etzel : “ Who then will succour me ?
The land as well as castles all will I give to thee,
If thou upon my foemen avenge me, Rüdeger.
Thou'lt be a mighty sovran, of Etzel nigh the peer.”

2159.

But Rüdeger made answer : “ How could I this essay ?
At home within my dwelling I bade them come and stay ;
Of drink and meat I offer'd to them in kindly wise,
And gave them gifts : how can I now death for them devise ?

2160.

“ The folk belike are thinking that I am cowardly !
My services in nothing to them did I deny—
Or to the noble princes, or any of their men—
That we are knit in friendship repenteth me amain.

2161.

I gave away my daughter to Giselher the thane.
 All the world she could not have look'd for better than
 Honour or good breeding, in truth or worldly gear.
 Ne'er saw prince so youthful in virtuous mind his peer."

2162.

Not yet again spake Kriemhild: "Right noble Rüdiger,
 Now let our grievous trouble for both your party sit
 On me and the king also; and bear ye well it mind
 That never host was fated such baleful guests to find."

2163.

Then to the noble lady the margrave answer made:
 To-day, with life, must ransom by Rüdiger be paid
 For what to me of kindness thou and my lord have shown
 For that cause I must perish,— and it must now be done."

2164.

This very day, well know I, my castles and my land
 Lost, ownerless, fall to you, through what ye now command.
 My wife and child commend I unto your gracious care,
 And eke the hapless people that at Beilzen are."

2165.

Now Rüdiger, God bless thee!" the king in answer said;
 He and the queen together exceeding glad were made;
 Right well unto thy people our care we wish to give,
 Though if good luck be with me I trust thou yet may'st live."

2166.

And so upon the venture body and soul he cast;
 Whereon the wife of Etzel began to weep at last.
 Aid he: "What I have promised I must to you fulfil;
 Voe for my friends, whose foeman I am against my will."

2167.

Then from the king one saw him depart in mournful mood.
And to his warriors turning, who close beside him stood,
He spake : "To don your armour 'tis time, my liegemen all,
On yonder brave Burgundians, alas ! I needs must fall."

2168.

They bade their folk then hasten to where their arms were found,—
Haply it were a helmet, or else a buckler round,—
Whate'er it was they wanted, their servants brought the same.
Ere long the baleful tidings to the proud exiles came.

2169.

So Rüdeger in armour with men five hundred went,
Besides a dozen warriors who help unto him lent.
These would the meed of valour win in the stormy fray;—
They had but little warning that death so near them lay.

2170.

Then Rüdeger in helmet one saw march on before ;
Keen-edged were all the weapons the margrave's liegemen bore,
And broad the shining bucklers upon their arms as well.
'Twas all seen by the fiddler : sore ruth upon him fell.

2171.

Young Giselher beheld, too, the father of his bride
With fast-bound helmet marching. That this could aught betide,
Save what was good and friendly, how could he then forbode?
The noble prince was therefore exceeding glad of mood.

2172.

"Now suchlike friends be welcome," said Giselher the thane,
"Which we upon our journey have had the luck to gain.
Of my betrothed lady we'll profit here right well :
I'm glad, upon my honour, this plighting e'er befell."

I know not what time I will see you again
When saw you for the first time
With fasten'd beams
by us will Redeem you for

pen as the fiddle - ~~it~~ if ~~you~~ ~~there~~ it ~~was~~
One saw the nothe & ~~it~~ ~~was~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~way~~
His goodly shied he ~~down~~ ~~and~~ ~~he~~ ~~was~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~
He could not offer ~~any~~ ~~one~~ ~~to~~ ~~him~~ ~~for~~

Then cried the noble margrave, "Be on your guard, I warn you. We should have had my sword. Once were we friends: now will

They shudder'd at these things, those even, though they
for them but little common there was between a man
since he would fight against them whom he had sent to
From foes they had already had more than a war.

'Now grant it, God in Heaven,' the warrior bemoaned;
'That you will let your pity be moved in our aid,
And that abounding honour which hope mine is gone,
Much liefer would I trust you thus than to believe.'

"I can in nowise help it," the brave man said thereon;
 "In battle I must meet you, since so I swore to do.
 Now guard yourselves, bold heroes, as ye your lives hold dear
 From me the wife of Etzel would no refusal hear."

2191.

"That would I do right gladly," young Giselher replied :
"But these my high-born kinsmen who still are here inside,
If they at your hands perish, the friendship firmly knit
With you and eke your daughter by me must be acquit."

2192.

"Then God have mercy on us!" the gallant warrior spake.
Thereon they raised their bucklers, as though a way to make,
By force, unto the strangers within Kriemhilda's hall.
Then loudly from the stairway was Hagen heard to call :

2193.

"Now for a while yet tarry, most noble Rüdeger ;"
Such were the words of Hagen : "we would again confer,—
Myself and eke my masters,— forced by necessity :
How will it profit Etzel if we poor exiles die ?

2194.

"I am in grievous trouble," yet Hagen said, "the shield
That Lady Gotelinda gave me as mine to wield,
The Huns for me have batter'd and hack'd it out of hand :
In friendliness I brought it unto King Etzel's land.

2195.

"If so be God in heaven would grant me of His grace
To hold as good a buckler once more before my face,
As that which thou dost handle, right noble Rüdeger,
No longer in the combat need I a hauberk wear."

2196.

"Right gladly would I serve thee as touching this my shield,
Durst I make thee the offer in spite of Dame Kriemhild.
— O thou take it, Hagen, and bear it on thine hand ;
at if thou shouldst bring it to thy Burgundian land !"

2197.

Then he to give the buckler so readily agreed,
 Then were there eyes in plenty that with hot tears were red.
 Of gifts it was the latest that unto warrior e'er
 By Rüdeger was given, the lord of Bechelar.

2198.

How fierce soe'er was Hagen, however hard in mood,
 Yet stirr'd that gift his pity, with which the warrior good,
 So nigh to his last moments, had freely him endow'd;
 And with him fell to weeping full many a chieftain proud.

2199.

"Now God in Heaven reward thee, most noble Rüdeger;
 The like of thee will never be met with anywhere,
 Who unto exiled warriors so royally dost give:
 God grant that all thy virtue for evermore may live."

2200.

"Woe's me for this betiding!" said Hagen yet again:
 "We've had to bear already so great a load of pain,
 Must we with friends be striving? Now God our refuge be!"
 Then made the margrave answer: "It grieves me bitterly."

2201.

"Your gift I'll now requite you, most noble Rüdeger,—
 Howe'er these high-born warriors themselves towards you bear,—
 To wit that here in battle you ne'er shall feel my hand,
 Though all by you should perish of the Burgundian land."

2202.

In courtly wise he bent him, the worthy Rüdeger
 On all sides they were weeping that such heart-so
 By no one to be mended:— a dread need
 The father of all virtues in Rüdeger wou

2203.

Then from the house-door speaking the minstrel Volker said:
 "Since my companion Hagen a truce with you has made,
 To you I also promise safe-conduct from my hand;
 For well have you deserved it since came we to the land."

2204.

"You most, most noble margrave, be messenger of mine.
 These richly golden armlets gave me the margravine,
 That I should surely wear them here at the revelry:
 You must yourself behold them and witness bear for me."

2205.

"Would God in Heaven allow it," then answer'd Rüdiger,
 "The margravine should give you still more of such to wear!
 Unto my wife your message right gladly will I give—
 Thereat be ye not doubtful— if I to see her live."

2206.

And even whilst he promised, his buckler Rüdiger
 Raised: and in mood of madness no longer could forbear,
 But rash'd upon the strangers,— a very warrior now;
 And fast the mighty margrave dealt round him many a blow.

2207.

Aloof together standing Volker and Hagen stay'd,
 According to the promise the warriors twain had made.
 Yet more, as gallant, found he waiting beside the door;
 Whence Rüdiger the battle began with trouble sore.

2208.

With murderous intention he was allow'd therein
 By Gunther and by Gernot, who heroes should have been.
 Hiselher aside stood, so great his sorrows were;—
 He hoped, and therefore avoided Rüdiger.

2209.

anon the margrave's liegemen rush'd forth upon the foe
 like warriors true one saw them after their leader go
 they bore their keen-edged weapons ready in hand to wield
 and many a helm they shatter'd and many a bone smelt

2210.

Many the swift strokes also the weary warriors sent
 On him of Bechelaren, that straight and sure went
 Right through the bright mail armour, right to the very life
 And glorious deeds of daring achieved they in that strife

2211.

When Rüdeger's noble comrades within had made their war
 Volker along with Hagen rush'd swiftly to the fray
 They gave to no one quarter, save to that huge man
 The blood through helmets, shatter'd by hands of such men

2212.

How grimly in that chamber the clang of swords was heard
 And many of the shield-plates sprang off beneath their power
 The jewels hack'd from off them fell on the bloody floor
 In such grim humour fought they as might be never more

2213.

The lord of Bechelaren went up and down the hall,
 As one who might in battle by strength accomplish all
 By Rüdeger's achievements that day it might be told
 He was indeed a warrior, right praiseworthy and bold

2214.

Here also stood those warriors Gunther and
 Who in the stress of battle full many a he
 And Giseler and Dankwart,— the twain
 And so full many a warrior unto his last

2215.

Well Rüdeger bore witness that he was strong enow,
And brave, with proven armour; what heroes laid he low!
'Twas seen by a Burgundian: wrath strove within him deep.
On Rüdeger the noble then death began to creep.

2216.

Stout Gernot 'twas, who loudly the hero challenged then.
He cried unto the margrave: "Wilt thou of all my men
Not one unscathed leave me, most noble Rüdeger?
It moves me beyond measure; the sight I cannot bear.

2217.

"Now lo! the gift you gave me to your own ruin tends,
Since you have taken from me so many of my friends.
Now turn towards me hither, thou noble, gallant man,
I'll make your gift avail me with all the skill I can."

2218.

Or ever that the margrave had won his way to him,
Mail coats that erst were shining must needs be spoilt and dim.
Then either at the other, thirsting for honour, ran;
And each to guard his body from deadly wounds began.

2219.

Yet smote their swords so keenly, against them all was vain.
And then was Gernot stricken by Rüdeger the thane
Athwart his flint-like helmet, till downward flow'd the blood;
All in a trice repaid him that gallant knight and good.

2220.

Aloft the gift of Rüdeger in hand he swung: and though
His own wound, too, was deadly, he dealt on him a blow
Through his stalwart buckler unto his helmet's slot.
His Gotlinda's husband fell dead upon the spot.

2221.

In sooth a gift so precious was worse requited ne'er ;
The two fell slain together, Gernot and Rüdeger,
Like-fated in the combat, each by the other's stroke.
When this great loss to Hagen was known, his wrath outbroke.

2222.

Thus spake the Tronian hero : " In evil plight are we !
In these two have we suffer'd so great an injury
As ne'er can be o'ertided by peoples or by lands ;
Now hold we Rüdeger's chieftains as bail in luckless hands."

2223.

" Woe on me for my brother, who here in death doth lie !
How cometh, every moment, some tale of misery !
And I must mourn for ever the noble Rüdeger :
The loss to me is double, and grievous 'tis to bear."

2224.

So Giselher, beholding his lady's father dead :—
And they who still were living a grievous reckoning paid,
Death fell upon them sorely seeking to take his own ;
Of them from Bechelaren there lived ere long not one.

2225.

Now Giselher and Gunther and with them Hagen too,
Dankwart and Volker also,— all warriors good and true,—
Came forward all together, to where the twain were laid :
Then was there by the heroes great lamentation made.

2226.

" Death sorely us despoileth," spake the lad Giselher :
" But make an end of weeping, and get we to the air
To cool our mail-clad bodies, worn as we are with strife ;
Here God, I ween, will grant us but scanty spell of life."

2227.

Some sitting, others leaning, one saw there many a thane.
They once again were idle : and round about them, slain,
Lay Rüdeger's companions. The uproar all was laid.
So long the silence lasted, that Etzel grew afraid.

2228.

"Woe on me for such service !" then spake the royal wife :
"These folk are not so trusty that on our foeman's life
Shall vengeance due be taken by Rüdeger's command :
He means to take them safely back to Burgundian land.

2229.

"What boots it us, King Etzel, that we with him and his
Have shared whate'er he wanted ? The chief hath done amiss :
He who should wreak our vengeance, doth wish a peace to gain."
Thereunto answer'd Volker, the all-accomplish'd thane :

2230.

"Not so, alas ! the story, most noble queen, I rede ;
And, dare I charge with falsehood a dame so nobly bred,
Thee, devilishly lying of Rüdeger, I heard ;
For he and his companions from peace have sorely err'd.

2231.

"That which the king commanded he did so zealously,
That he and all his people dead in yon chamber lie.
Now cast about, Kriemhilda, on errands whom to send !
For Rüdeger the hero hath served thee to the end.

2232.

"And wilt thou not believe me, see it thou shalt anon !"
 d to her heartfelt sorrow so was it straightway done :
 bore the mangled hero before the king and queen.
 anes of Etzel never so sad a sight had seen.

225.

When they beheld the mourning — the king and his men,
No pennant could have won — the king and his men,
How marvellous the mourning — the king and his men,
Who one and all were white — the king and his men.

226.

The sorrowing of King Richard — the king and his men,
Was even as a lion — the king and his men,
So lifted in his anger — the king and his men,
Good Richard loved a day — the king and his men.

ADVENTURE OF THE KING — THE KING AND HIS MEN WARRIOR AND THE KING

227.

So great a sound of mourning — the king and his men,
From palace walls and towers — the king and his men,
By one of Diomed's daughters — the king and his men,
How swiftly then he started — the king and his men.

228.

Unto the prince then spake he — "Hearken, my Lord Diomed,
As long as I've been living — he or have I heard the like
Of such unearthly wailing — as I have heard but now:
Some harm unto King Egeus — himself hath come, I know.

229.

"How else would all the people — be in distress by
The king, or may be Kriemhild, — must one of them
Slain by those daring strangers, — who bore them
And many goodly warriors — are wailing bitter)

2238.

Then spake of Bern the hero : " My trusty lieges dear,
Now be ye not too hasty ! what hath befallen here
Was wrought by homeless warriors, by dire distresses driven ;
And let them use the freedom that I to them have given."

2239.

Then spake the gallant Wolfhart : " I will myself be gone
And ask about the matter, what 'tis that they have done.
And then I will report it to you, my master dear,
When yonder I discover what mean the cries we hear."

2240.

Thereon Lord Dietrich answer'd : " When one has wrath to face,
Full oft, at ill-timed questions, 'tis found to be the case
That warriors too swiftly are apt offence to take :
In truth I will not, Wolfhart, that you the quest should make."

2241.

Thereon he summon'd Helfrich right speedily to go ;
And from the men of Etzel he bade him get to know,—
Or even from the strangers,— what doings there had been ;
For ne'er such great lamenting of people was there seen.

2242.

The envoy made inquiry : " What hath there here been done ?"
Then answer'd one among them : " Now is for ever gone
All that we had of pleasure in this Hungarian land !—
Here Rüdeger lies slaughter'd by the Burgundians' hand.

2243.

" Of those who enter'd with him not one came out again."
Then verily to Helfrich ne'er could be greater pain.
In sooth he ne'er had carried news so unwillingly :
The messenger to Dietrich went weeping bitterly.

2244.

"What hast thou," then said Dietrich, "for us discoveréd?
And wherefore, warrior Helfrich, thy tears so freely shed?"
"Good cause have I for weeping," answer'd the noble thane:
"Good Rüdeger is lying by the Burgundians slain."

2245.

The knight of Bern made answer: "God grant that may not be!
That were a fearful vengeance, and foul fiend's pleasantry:
Howe'er were such requital deserved by Rüdeger?
For well am I persuaded he held the strangers dear."

2246.

Thereto made Wolfhart answer: "If they this deed have done
It verily shall stand for the life of everyone!
To us 'twould be disgraceful if this we were to stand,
For Rüdeger has served us right often with his hand."

2247.

But Amelung's chieftain bade them better inform'd to be.
Meanwhile within his window right mournfully sat he;
And Hildebrand enjoin'd he unto the guests to go,
That he whate'er had happen'd from them might surely know.

2248.

That warrior bold in battle, the ancient Hildebrand,
Nor shield nor any weapon took with him in his hand;
He to the guests was going in courtesy alone.
But sore were the upbraidings made by his sister's son.

2249.

For spake the fiery Wolfhart: "Wilt thou so simply go?
Then certes some misusage thou wilt not fail to know!
So, full of grief and trouble, thou needs must homeward fare:
But if thou takest thy weapons they each will have a care."

2250.

Then did the ancient gird him e'en as the stripling bade.
But lo! before he knew it, in fighting gear array'd,
Were standing Dietrich's warriors, with drawn sword everyone.
This thing the hero liked not, and gladly had forgone.

2251.

He asked where they were going. "Along with you we'll fare!
Perchance Hagen of Tronjé so much the less may dare
With mocking speech to meet you,— which well he knows to use."
When that he heard, the warrior no longer could refuse.

2252.

The gallant Volker saw them in armour fully dight,
Those knights of Bern come marching, all Dietrich's men of might;
Their swords were girt upon them, they carried shield in hand.
Unto his lords he told it of the Burgundian land.

2253.

Then spake the fiddle-player: "Yonder I see them go,
The followers of Dietrich,— in semblance of a foe,
With weapons and in helmets: us mean they to withstand.
I trow for us poor exiles misfortune is at hand."

2254.

E'en at the self-same moment came Hildebrand to him,
And at his feet his buckler he set upon its rim.
The followers of Gunther to question then he sought:
"Alas! what harm, good heroes, to you hath Rüdeger wrought?"

2255.

"Me hath my master Dietrich sent unto you to say:
'If any one among you hath by his hand this day
Laid low the noble margrave,— as we are told by some,—
An injury so grievous we ne'er could overcome.'"

2256.

Then Hagen spake of Tronjé: "No lie the tidings are;
Though fain I were to grant you, for love of Rüdiger,
That they had lied who told you, and he were still in life:
He must be ever wept for by man and maid and wife."

2257.

When all knew, of a surety, that Rüdiger was dead,
The warriors bewail'd him, as love and fealty bade.
From each of Dietrich's liegemen one saw the tears-drops fall
O'er chin and beard descending: sore was the grief of all.

2258.

Then Siegestab outspeaking,— the duke from Bern,—said he:
"Forever now is ended the hospitality
That Rüdiger aye show'd us after our days of pain.
The Comfort of the exile lies by you heroes slain."

2259.

Then from among the Amelungs, the warrior Wolfwin said:
"Were I this day before me to see my father dead,
Ne'er could I feel more sorrow than at this stricken life:
Alas! who now will comfort the worthy margrave's wife?"

2260.

Thereon in mood of anger the thane Sir Wolfhart cried:
"Who on so many a foray shall now the warriors guide,
As heretofore the margrave so many a time hath done?
Alas, most noble Rüdiger, that thou from us art gone!"

2261.

There Helferich and Wolfbrand and Helmut also were,
With all their friends, bewailing the death of Rüdiger;
And Hildebrand for sobbing could ask no more of aught.
He spake: "Now do ye, warriors, that which my lord hath—"

2262.

"Give Rüdeger's dead body to us from out the hall,
With whom, in very sorrow, our joys are ended all ;
And let us now requite him for all that he hath done
For us, in faithful friendship, and many another one.

2263.

"We also here are strangers, like the thane Rüdeger,
Why do ye keep us waiting? Let us his body bear
Away, to him our service e'en after death to give :
Far rather had we done it, whilst he were yet alive !"

2264.

"No service is so worthy," then the King Gunther spake,
"As that for a dead comrade a friend doth undertake,
And steadfast faith I call it, where'er the same I find.
Ye pay him honour rightly, to you he hath been kind."

2265.

"How long must we be pleading?" Wolfhart the warrior said :
"Since our best Consolation by you is stricken dead,
And we, alas ! no longer the good thereof may have,
So let us take the chieftain and lay him in his grave."

2266.

Thereto made answer Volker : "He shall be given by none !
Come to the hall and take him, here where the thane, fordone
With deadly wounds disfigured, lies in the bloody pool :
That were to do your duty to Rüdeger in full."

2267.

Thereon bold Wolfhart answer'd : "Sir Minstrel, God doth kno
No need have ye to taunt us, ye've done us harm enow.
Durst I offend my master, you'd be the worse for this,
But we must pass it over, since strife forbidden us is."

2270.

Then spake the noble knight: "For shame, my lord,
When all that is in me, I will not leave behind,
By me that were not worth aught, I will not leave behind,
The speech of his companion, I will not leave behind."

2271.

"That shall not serve your purpose," said the noble knight,
"I'll so make your noble heart, that you shall see,
Along with you, when you shall see, that you shall see,
I cannot brook with him, that you shall see."

2272.

Then spake the noble knight: "I will not leave behind,
Of mine untrusty knight, my noble knight,
Must speedily be seen, that you shall see,
Howe'er beside my knight, in the beginning of the day."

2273.

He would have sprung from him, if he had not seen that
By Hildebrand his uncle, with hands upon him, that
"In this thy senseless anger, that you shall see,
And so my master's favour, that you shall see."

2272.

"Let go the lion, master: hence though he be of mood,
Comes he into my clutches," said the noble knight,
"E'en though a world of people, he with his hands hath slain,
I'll kill him, that the story he never may tell again."

2273.

By this was sorely quicken'd the Berners' angry mood,
And Wolfhart clutch'd his buckler, a ready knight as
E'en like a savage lion in front of them he rush'd,
Whilst following close behind him his friends the other

2274.

Yet though he sprang so swiftly, to reach the palace wall
He could not on the stairway old Hildebrand forestall,
Who would not that another first in the fight should be.
Their guerdon from the strangers they both got presently.

2275.

Then quickly upon Hagen sprang Master Hildebrand :
The clashing of the sword-blades was heard on either hand ;
Their wrath was sorely kindled, as presently was plain ;
A fiery stream was scatter'd from off their weapons twain.

2276.

Yet quickly were they sunder'd under the stress of fight :
The men of Bern so caused it, prevailing in their might.
Whereon away from Hagen betook him Hildebrand ;
And needs must gallant Volker stout Wolfhart's onset stand.

2277.

He smote the fiddle-player upon his helmet good,
So bravely that the sword-edge unto the sidebands hew'd ;
The fiddler bold repaid him with all his might and main,
And laid his blows on Wolfhart, until he reel'd again.

2278.

They struck from the mail-armour of fiery sparks enow ;
Their hate for one another was felt in every blow ;
Then came the warrior Wolfwin of Bern the twain between :
Had he not been a hero that never could have been.

2279.

The warrior Gunther also gave with unstinting hand
A welcome to the heroes far-famed of Amelung land .
And Giselher the lordly made helms that
On head of many a warrior, ruddy and r

2280.

And Dankwart, Hagen's brother, a fearsome man was he :
 Whatever he, already, on Etzel's chivalry
 In battle had accomplish'd, e'en as the wind was naught :
 The son of the bold Aldrian now like a madman fought.

2281.

Richart and Gerbart likewise, Helfrich and eke Wichart,
 Who oftentimes in battle right well had play'd their part,
 Now plainly show'd their prowess to Gunther's fighting men ;
 Wolfbrand in combat proudly was seen to bear him then,

2282.

And like a madman raging fought ancient Hildebrand.
 Full many a doughty warrior then fell by Wolfhart's hand,
 Death-stricken by his sword-blows, into the pool of blood.
 Thus Rüdeger avenged they, these gallant knights and good.

2283.

Then fought the noble Siegstab as of his might was due ;
 Ha ! and upon his foemen what goodly helmets too
 Were shiver'd in the battle by Dietrich's sister's son ;
 He could not in the struggle e'er better work have done.

2284.

Thereon the sturdy Volker, as soon as he beheld
 How from the tough mail-armour the blood in streamlets well'd
 At gallant Siegstab's sword-strokes, the hero's wrath arose ;
 Forward he sprang to meet him : and so his life to lose

2285.

Upon the spot had Siegstab through that same fiddle-man ;
 Who forthwith of his cunning to give such proof began
 That by his mighty weapon quick death must needs ensue.
 Old Hildebrand avenged him, as of his strength was due.

2286.

"Woe, for my lord belovéd !" cried Master Hildebrand,
"Who here in death is lying stricken by Volker's hand :
Henceforth this fiddle-player shall save himself no more !"
Bold Hildebrand was wrathful as ne'er he was before.

2287.

Then smote he so at Volker, that far to either wall
The bands and clasps in pieces were strown about the hall,
From helm and eke from buckler of that same minstrel bold :
And so of sturdy Volker the ending there was told.

2288.

The liegemen then of Dietrich came thronging to the rout ;
They smote till from the hauberks the links flew far about,
And splinter'd weapons saw one as high in air they flew ;
Hot flowing blood in streamlets from out the helms they drew.

2289.

When Hagen, lord of Tronjé, saw Volker lying slain,
More grievous was his sorrow than all the other pain
That in this high foregathering he had for man or kin.
What vengeance for the hero did Hagen then begin !

2290.

"It shall not long advantage the old man Hildebrand
That yonder lies my helpmate slain by the hero's hand,—
The veriest good comrade that ever yet I had !"
He raised his shield, and forward he rush'd with hewing blade.

2291.

Meanwhile the stalwart Helfrich had stricken Dankwart low.
To Giselher and Gunther grievous it was enow
When in the stress of battle they saw him fall beneath :
With his own hands already he had avenged his death.

XXXVIII.] HOW DIETRICH'S WARRIORS ALL WERE SLAIN.

2292.

Now all this while did Wolfhart strike in and down again,
And with his sword murthering he new'd at Gunther's men.
A third time he the journey had made along the hall,
And many were the warriors down'd by his hand in all.

2293.

Then Giselher the lordly to Wolfhart loudly spake :
"Woe ! that so fierce a foeman 'twas for my luck to make !
O noble knight and gallant, now turn thyself to me,
I'll do my best to end it : it may no longer be."

2294.

To Giselher, in fighting, then Wolfhart turn'd him round,
And each upon the other made many a gaping wound :
With such a mighty onset against the king he cast'd,
The blood beneath his footsteps above his head was dash'd.

2295.

With swift and deadly sword-strokes the son of Ute fair
Gave greeting unto Wolfhart, the gallant hero, there.
How strong the thane soever, he was not to be saved :
So young a king could never more bravely have behaved.

2296.

He struck a blow at Wolfhart, cleaving the hauberk good,
And over him and downwards, gush'd from the wound the blood ;
Unto the death he wounded that man of Dietrich's own ;
None but a very warrior to do the like had known.

2297.

As soon as gallant Wolfhart was of the wound aware,
He let his shield slip downwards ; but higher in the air
A weapon strong he wielded : it was a keen one too ;
Wherewith through helm and hauberk the hero Giselher slew.

2298.

So had they one another to cruel death fordone,
And then of Dietrich's lieges there lived but one alone.
When Hildebrand the ancient beheld how Wolfhart fell,
I trow, until his ending, such grief he ne'er could tell.

2299.

The men-at-arms of Gunther were dead now everyone,
As likewise those of Dietrich; and Hildebrand had gone
Unto the place where Wolfhart was lying in the blood:
Within his arms he folded that warrior brave and good.

2300.

Fain would he from the chamber have borne him bodily,
But he was all too weighty, he e'en must let him lie.
The dying man uplifted his eyes amid the blood,
And saw well that his kinsman would help him if he could.

2301.

"My well-belovéd uncle," the dying one then said,
"At this time it avails not to give me any aid.
Now ware you well of Hagen! ay, take my words for good;
For in his heart he nurses an ever cruel mood.

2302.

"If after death my kinsfolk for me should mourning be,
Unto my next and dearest I bid you say for me
That they for me must weep not: need for it is there none,
Here lie I slain in honour, by kingly hands fordone.

2303.

"So throughly here, moreover, have I avenged my life,
That cause indeed for wailing hath many a good knight's wife:
If anyone should ask you so may you answer plain,
A good five score are lying whom I myself have slain."

2304.

While had Hagen likewise upon the minstrel thought,
 In Hildebrand the valiant unto his end had brought.
 Spake he to the warrior: "My loss thou shalt requite,
 Ere thou hast bereft us of many a goodly knight."

2305.

Struck a blow at Hildebrand, such that one might have told
 The hissing sound of Balmung, the sword that Hagen bold
 Siegfried's self had taken when he that hero slew;
 Blow the old man parried: ay! he was valiant too.

2306.

Warrior of Dietrich against the Tronian knight
 Weapon broad uplifted, that keenly too could smite.
 Round the man of Gunther yet might he not prevail.
 Once again smote Hagen through well-wrought coat of
 mail.

2307.

When the old Sir Hildebrand was of the wound aware,
 Evil yet he dreaded from Hagen's hand to bear.
 Shield the man of Dietrich threw back behind his head,
 Desperately wounded, the chief from Hagen fled.

2308.

The knightly warriors remain'd there but a pair,—
 Gunther's self and Hagen none others living were.
 Hildebrand all bleeding in flight had safety sought,
 When he came to Dietrich a woeful tale he brought.

2309.

Now his master sitting with visage woe-begone,—
 Since was yet more sorry when he his tale had done;
 The bloody hauberk of Hildebrand look'd he,
 Thought of him his tidings in all anxiety.

2310.

"Now tell me, Master Hildebrand, why are ye in this state,
And reeking with your life-blood? or who hath done you that
I ween that in the palace you with the guests have fought :
So strictly I forbade it that ye in nowise ought."

2311.

Unto his lord he answer'd : " 'Twas Hagen did it all !
He set on me and gave me this wound within the hall,
E'en as I from the warrior to turn myself began.
And hither from that devil barely with life I ran ! "

2312.

Then he of Bern made answer : " Ye are but served aright !
Seeing that ye had heard me swear friendship with the knight
And then ye break the peace-pledge granted to him by me :
Would it not ever shame me your life should forfeit be."

2313.

"Now be ye not so wrathful, my good Lord Dietrich, pray !
On me and on my kinsfolk the loss too hard doth weigh.
We purposed from the palace to carry Rüdeger ;
To grant it all unwilling King Gunther's liegemen were."

2314.

"Now woe upon such tidings ! is Rüdeger then dead ?
This is the greatest sorrow that e'er I suffer'd.
The noble Gotelinda is child of aunt of mine.
Ay ! woe for the poor orphans who at Bechlaren pine."

2315.

His death weigh'd sorely on him, with ruth and sorrow great.
He fell to bitter weeping ; sad was the hero's strait :
" Woe for my trusty helpmate who now is lost to me !
Ay ! of King Etzel's liegeman the like I ne'er shall see."

2316.

Now must ye, Master Hildebrand, tell me the story true:
Which of the warriors was it who him so foully slew?
That did the stalwart Gernot by strength of arm," he said:
By Rüdeger's hand the hero is also lying dead."

2317.

So Hildebrand then spake he: "Now let my liegemen know
That they must straightway arm them, for thither will I go;
And bid them bring me hither my shirt of shining mail.
From the Burgundian heroes myself I'll have the tale."

2318.

Then Hildebrand made answer: "Who shall now go with thee?
None others hast thou living but what thou here dost see;
I am thine only liegeman; the others all are dead."
He shudder'd at these tidings— in sooth, there was good need,

2319.

For never such great sorrow he in this world had known.
He spake: "And if my liegemen are truly dead and gone,
Then am I God-forsaken, I, Dietrich, wretched wight!
Erewhile a noble sovran and full of power and might."

2320.

"How could such thing have happen'd?" spake Dietrich once
again,
"These far-renowned heroes,— that all of them are slain
By men with fighting weary, in sore necessity!
But for mine evil fortune, death still afar would be."

2321.

"Seeing my doom avails not to ward from me this ill
Now tell me, of the guest-folk are any living still?"
Then Master Hildebrand answer'd: "God knoweth
Hagen to wit, and Gunther the noble king—remain

2322.

"Dear Wolfhart, woe betide me ! if thou from me art torn,
Too quickly may I rue me that ever I was born !
And Siegestab and Wolfwin, and none the less Wolfbrand.
Who now shall help my journey back to the Amelung's land

2323.

"Helfrich the ever gallant, and have they laid him low ?
And Gerebart and Wichart,— how weep for them enow ?
Of all my joy and pleasure the ending is this day :
Fain would I die for sorrow— alas that no man may !"

ADVENTURE XXXIX.—HOW GUNTHER AND HAGE
AND KRIEMHILDA WERE SLAIN.

2324.

Then for himself Lord Dietrich sought out a suit to wear,
And Master Hildebrand help'd him to don his fighting gear.
So sore was the lamenting made by the stalwart man,
That all the house to echo with his loud voice began.

2325.

But quickly he recover'd a fitting hero's mood,
And grimly was his armour donn'd by that warrior good.
A shield compact right firmly he carried in his hand ;—
Then straightway forth he sallied with Master Hildebrand.

2326.

Spake Hagen, lord of Tronjé : "I see there, drawing nigh,
The noble warrior Dietrich ; for that great injury
That here hath him befallen, he will upon us set.
This day 'twill be discover'd who doth the honours get.

[XIX.] GUNTHER, HAGEN AND KRIEMHILD ARE SLAIN 307

2327.

! to himself Lord Dietrich of Bern durst think that he
like, so strong of body and terrible there were
should he for our doings a reckoning demand?
Hagen spake: "against him I dare fight well to stand."

2328.

They heard the words of Hagen,— Dietrich and Hildebrand
came to where the warriors had taken both their stand
without the house, together, leaning against the wall
his goodly shield had Dietrich upon his arm let fall.

2329.

Then Dietrich spake in answer, grievously sorrowing:
"Why hast thou done in this wise, O Gunther, mighty King,
to me who am a stranger? to thee what had I done?
All comfort that was left me is now for ever gone."

2330.

"With that great deed of vengeance ye were not yet content
When Rüdeger the hero to bloody death you sent:
How have ye taken from me my liegemen everyone;—
Oh! never to your heroes would I such scathe have done."

2331.

"Now of yourselves be mindful, and of your own distress,
The death of friends and kinsfolk, your toil and weariness;
Both it not weigh upon you, good warriors, heavily?
Alas, the death of Rüdeger is bitterness to me."

2332.

"In this world never happen'd such weal
He took but ill account of my life and
By you of all its pleasures
In truth I cannot ever my life

2333.

"In sooth," then answer'd Hagen, "So guilty are we not ;
For verily your heroes came marching to this spot :
Well-arm'd, for some set purpose, in such large company :
To you methinks the story was not told truthfully."

2334.

"What else should I believe then ? 'twas said by Hildebrand
That when my knights besought you— the men of Amelu
land—

That you would give them Rüdeger from out the palace-hall,
Naught else but jibes you offer'd to these bold heroes all."

2335.

Then spake the king of Rhineland : "They did their wish avo
Hence Rüdeger to carry ; that would I not allow,
To do despite to Etzel, and not to cross your men :
Till Wolfhart words unhandsome began to utter then."

2336.

Then answer'd him, the hero of Bern, "So let it be !
Yet Gunther, noble sovran, now of thy courtesy
Repay me for the sorrow that of thy doing came,
And make, bold knight, atonement, that I confirm the same."

2337.

"Give up thyself as hostage, thou and thy liegeman there ;
Then I myself will guard ye with all my greatest care,
Lest any of the Hunfolk should do ye aught of ill ;
In me thou shalt find nothing save faith and all goodwill."

2338.

But Hagen spake in answer : "Now God in
That any pair of warriors themselves to th
Who arm'd as yet so stoutly here
And still are all unfetter'd to face

2339.

“Beware, Gunther and Hagen,” then Dietrich answer made,
 “How ye refuse my offer ! ye twain on me have laid
 So sore a load of sorrow— on heart and spirit too ;
 If ye amends will make me, that may ye cheaply do.

2340.

“I give you my true promise, and pledge it with my hand,
 That I myself will with you ride home unto your land ;
 I’ll guide you in all honour, or will myself be slain,
 And will, the while I serve you, forget my bitter pain.”

2341.

“Now think thereon no longer,” Hagen in answer said,
 “’Twere not a fitting story about us to be said,
 That two such doughty warriors had bow’d to your demand :
 One sees beside you standing no one save Hildebrand.”

2342.

Then upspake Master Hildebrand : “Sir Hagen, God doth
 know,—
 Seeing that one hath offer’d to make a peace with you,—
 The hour is nigh when fitly the offer you might take :
 The peace my lord proposes ’twere well for you to make.”

2343.

“I’d sooner make atonement,” in answer Hagen said,
 “Ere in such coward fashion from any place I fled
 As thou hast done but lately, good Master Hildebrand !
 Methought against a foeman thou couldst more boldly stand !”

2344.

Old Hildebrand made answer : “Why taunt’st thou me therefor ?
 Who sat upon his buckler the Vaske-rock before,
 While friends of his so many the Spanish Walther slew ?
 About thyself in plenty are things that one might shew.”

2345.

Then spake the noble Dietrich : " It fits not heroes good
To rail at one another as any old wives would.
You, Hildebrand, forbid I to wrangle any more :
On me, a homeless warrior, are weighing troubles sore.

2346.

" Come let us hear, Sir Hagen," to him spake Dietrich then,
" What was it ye were saying, ye ready warriors twain,
When first ye saw me coming to you in armour dight ?
Ye vow'd that ye against me would singly stand in fight."

2347.

" That no man will deny you," thane Hagen made reply,
" And with some sturdy sword-strokes here fain am I to try,—
Unless the blade of Niblung within my hand should break :
Wroth am I that you purpose us two in pledge to take."

2348.

When Dietrich thus had hearken'd to savage Hagen's mood,
Quickly his shield uplifted that gallant thane and good.
How swiftly Hagen toward him down from the stairway sprang !
The goodly sword of Niblung loudly on Dietrich rang.

2349.

Then well the noble Dietrich knew that the valiant man
Right ruthless was in humour. The lord of Bern began
Against this deadly onset to guard himself aright ;
To him well known was Hagen, that all-accomplish'd knight.

2350.

Dread, too, had he of Balmung, a potent sword enow.
From time to time yet Dietrich gave back a wily blow,
Until at last, in fighting, Hagen o'ermaster'd he :
A single wound he dealt him ; 'twas deep and long to see.

2351.

Bethought him then Lord Dietrich : " Thou'rt weaken'd by the
strife,

I should have little honour were I to take thy life.
Sooner will I make trial, if I may thee compel
To be to me a hostage." With trouble this befell.

2352.

He let his shield fall downwards— great was his strength of
limb,

And Tronian Hagen clasp'd he close in his arms to him.
And thus was captive taken by him that gallant man ;
Whereat the noble Gunther sorely to grieve began.

2353.

Then Dietrich led forth Hagen, fast bound, to where her stand
The noble queen had taken ; and gave into her hand
The boldest of all warriors that ever weapon bare ;—
Then had she joy in plenty for all her bitter care.

2354.

For thanks the wife of Etzel unto the thane bent low :
" In heart and eke in body for ever blest be thou !
Now hast thou well repaid me for my unhappy lot ;
For this I'll ever serve thee if death prevent me not."

2355.

Then answer'd the Lord Dietrich : " His life thou e'en must spare,
O noble queen ! Then haply thou mayst become aware
How well he will atone for all he hath done to thee !
He must no whit be worsen'd, that him in bonds ye see."

2356.

He bade them carry Hagen to durance vile away,
And there imprison'd straitly unseen of men he lay.
Further the noble sovran aloud began to cry :
Where went that chief of Bern ? He hath done me

2357.

Then presently to meet him the noble Dietrich came.
Great was the might of Gunther, and well 'twas known to fam
Nor did he tarry longer;— before the hall he ran.
From their two weapons' meeting a dreadful din began.

2358.

Albeit that Lord Dietrich great fame long time had had,
So sore was Gunther's anger he raved like one gone mad;
For deadly foe he held him, so bitter was his pain:
'Tis reckon'd still a marvel that Dietrich was not slain.

2359.

So strong and full of valour was either of the twain,
The palace walls and turrets rang with their blows again.
While on the goodly helmets with swords they hack'd and hew'd
Then, verily, King Gunther, a royal courage shew'd.

2360.

Yet he of Bern o'ercame him, as likewise he had done
To Hagen; through the hauberk the hero's blood to run
Was seen, from that sharp weapon wherewith Sir Dietrich clow
Yet, weary as was Gunther, he valiantly strove.

2361.

Bound was the noble chieftain by Dietrich's hand alone,
Although a king should never such bonds have undergone.
He thought if he should leave them, the king and vassal, free,
That all on whom they lighted by them fordone must be.

2362.

Dietrich of Bern then took him a captive, closely-bound,
And by the hand he led him where he Kriemhilda found.
At sight of his affliction her sorrows greatly waned;
She spake: "Be welcome, Gunther, of the Burgundian land!"

He spake: "I deem that thou art
 Though I would not have thought
) queen, well as I know thee
 And that for the sake of the

Of Bern then spake he thus: "I have seen thee
 Knights of such fair renown
 As these, most generous men,
 See that ye let the answer

She vowed it in a grief: "I have seen thee
 His eyes were full of tears—
 Soon vengeance will come
 Of both these chosen warriors

Her evil mood moving, that he then said:
 That neither on the other from the time
 Until in front of Hagen the mother's heart
 On both of them a sentence

For first the queen betook her where she might Hagen see
 And spake unto the warrior,— how full of enmity!
 "What thou from me hast taken if thou again wilt give,
 Then home thou yet mayst journey to Burgundy alive."

2368.

But Hagen grim made answer: "You throw your word
 Most noble queen, for truly I've sworn, and now I say
 The treasure I will show not, so long as either
 Be living of my masters;— I'll yield it up to

2369.

"Then will I end the matter!" so spake the noble wife,
And forthwith bade her liegemen to take her brother's life.
They struck his head from off him, which by the hair she bore
Before the Tronian hero; then was his grief full sore.

2370.

For when, with sorrow stricken, he saw his master's head,
Thereon unto Kriemhilda the warrior spake and said:
"E'en as thou saidst, the matter thou hast to ending brought,
And likewise all hath happen'd as I beforehand thought.

2371.

"And now the noble sovran of Burgundy is not,
Nor Giselher the stripling, and eke the Lord Gernot,
None knoweth of the treasure save God and me alone:
And unto thee, she-devil, it never shall be known!"

2372.

Said she: "An evil guerdon dost thou to me award;
Yet in mine own possession I will have Siegfried's sword,
Which my beloved husband, when last I saw him, bare
That day when, by your doing, began my heartfelt care."

2373.

She drew it from the scabbard— he could not hinder her—
And of his life bethought her to rid that warrior.
With both her hands she swung it, and smote his head right off
King Etzel saw her do it, his grief was sore enough.

2374.

The prince cried: "Woe betide me, lo! now, how here is slain
And by a woman's doing, the very noblest thane
That ever came to battle, or ever buckler bore!
Albeit I was his foeman I could not sorrow more!"

—

Old Hildebrand said "That he will do
That she hath desired to say
Although myself but shew to thee
For this brave Troian: he will do as he will."

—

Then Hildebrand said "That he will do
And at the queen will shew
Ay, Hildebrand she shew will
But what could it avail her to shew?"

—

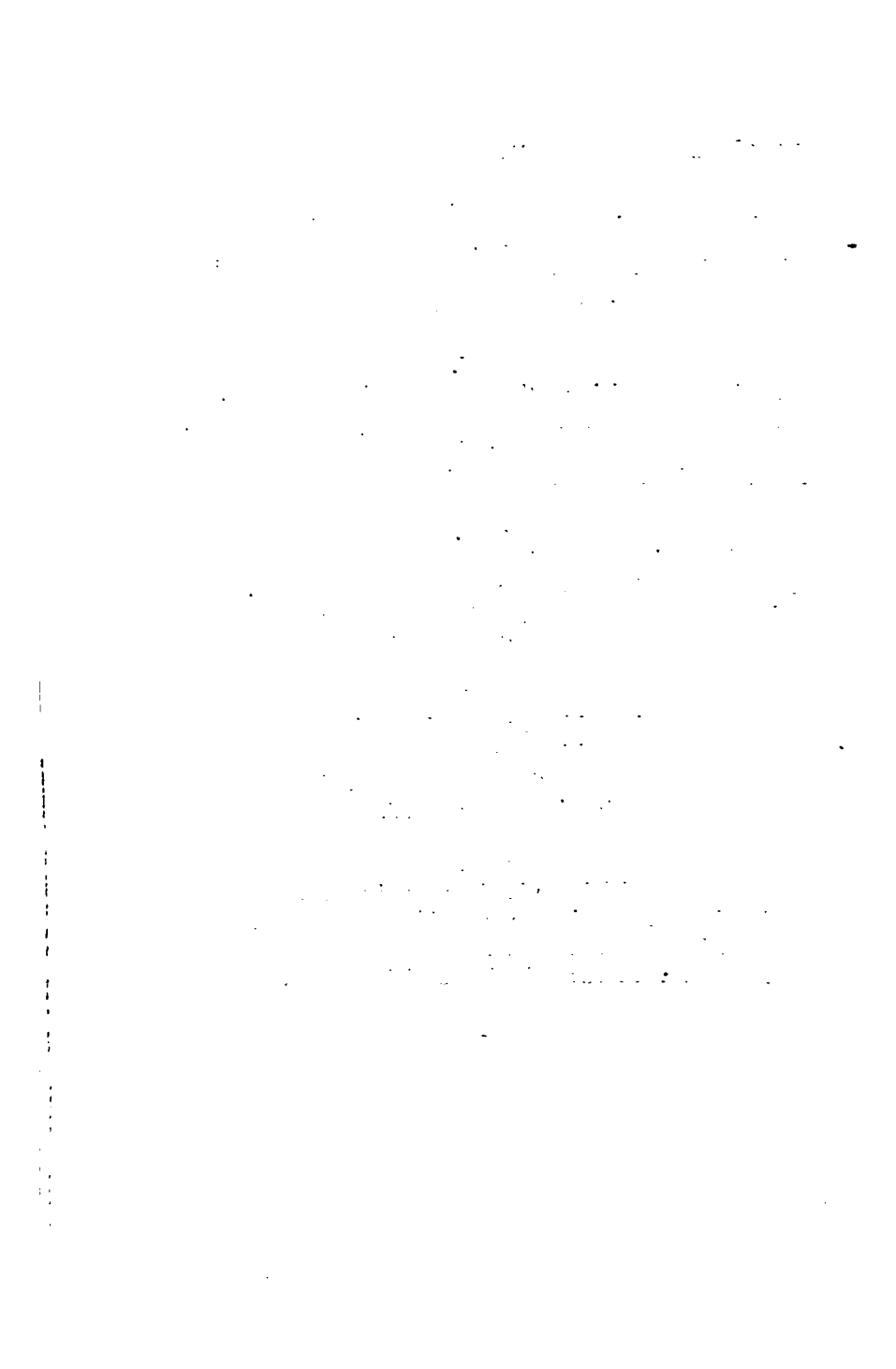
The bodies of the slain
And there the noble lay
Dietrich along with them
For kinsmen and for lay

—

There mickle pride and honour
The people all were wroth
In sorrowing was ended
As loving ever ended

—

I cannot tell you plainly
Save that in better wising
And noble Begones
The story now is ended



INDEX OF PROPER NAMES.

The numbers refer to the Stanzas.

- ALBERICH. A dwarf-king in Nibelung-land, from whom Siegfried won the Treasure and the Hood of Invisibility, 96, 493, 1117, etc.
- ALDRIAN. Father of Hagen and Dankwart, 1534, etc.
- ALMERICH. A Danubian hero, 1548, etc.
- AMELUNGS. A clan of which Dietrich of Bern was chieftain, 2247, 2259. The Amali are known to history as an Ostrogothic tribe, descended from Amala the tenth ancestor of Theodoric the Great. *Vide* Gibbon, ch. x.
- ARRAS, 1825.
- ASTOLD. A lord in Medlick, 1329.
- AZAGANG. A mythical Eastern land, 439.
- BALMUNG. The name of Siegfried's sword, 95, 207, 1798, 2347, etc.
- BECHELAREN. Pöchlarn on the Danube, 1147.
- BERN. Verona, 1718, etc.
- BLOEDELIN, or Bloedel. Etzel's brother. Bleda is the historical name of Attila's brother, 1346, 1879, etc.
- BOTLUNG. Father of Etzel, 1314, 1372. Attila's father is named in history Mundzuk.
- BRUNHILDA (Brünhilt). Queen of "Iceland" and wife of Gunther, 329, etc.
- BURGUNDIA, or Burgundy. A country on the middle Rhine, 2, etc.
- DANKRAT. Husband of Uté, and father of the Burgundian kings and Kriemhild, 7.
- DANKWART. Hagen's younger brother, 9, etc.
- DITTRICH. Lord of Bern, living with Etzel in banishment; identified with Theodoric, the great Ostrogothic conqueror and ruler of Italy, etc.
- EMMART. Margrave of the Burgundian kingdom; afterwards Kriemhilda, 9, 700, 1101, 1283, 1398, 1632, etc.

ELSE. Lord of the marches on the right bank of the Danube in Bavaria, 1545, 1603, etc.

ENSE. The river Ens, 1301.

ETZEL. Son of Botelung, and king of the Huns, known in history as Attila, 2, etc.

ETZELBURG. Etzel's residence, Ofen, in Hungary, 1379.

EVERDINGEN. Efferding on the Danube, 1302.

GELFRAT. A Bavarian noble, brother of Else, 1546, 1602, etc.

GERBART. One of Dietrich's followers, 2281, 2323.

GERE. A margrave and kinsman of the Burgundian kings, 9, etc., 741.

GERNOT. The second son of Dankrat and Uté, 4, etc.

GIBECHE. A king at Etzel's court, 1343, 1352, 1880.

GISELHER. The youngest son of Dankrat and Uté, 4, etc.

GOTELINDA. The wife of Rüdeger of Bechelaren, 1159, 1649, etc.

GRAN. A residence of Etzel's, 1497.

GUNTHER. The eldest of the three Burgundian kings, 4, etc.

Also the name of Siegfried's and Kriemhilda's infant son, 716, 780.

HADBURGA (Hadeburc). One of the two mermaids of the Danube, to whom Hagen spoke, 1535.

HAGEN. Lord of Troneg or Tronjé, elder son of Aldrian, brother of Dankwart, and a kinsman of the Burgundian kings, 9, etc.; appearance described, 1734.

HAWARD (Håwart). A Danish prince living at Etzel's court, 1807, 2031, 2073, etc.

HEIMBURG. An ancient town in Hungary, on the Austrian border, 1376.

HELKA (Helche). Etzel's first wife, known to history as Erca, 1143, 1381, etc.

HELMNOT. One of Dietrich's men, 2261.

HELFRICH (Helpfrich). One of Dietrich's men, 2241, 2261, 2291, etc.

HERRAT. Daughter of Nantwin and of Helka's sister, 1381.

HILDEBRAND. An old retainer and master in arms of Dietrich, 1718, 2271, etc.

HILDEGUND. A young lady, formerly at Etzel's court, 1756.

HORNBOGE. One of Etzel's men, 1344, 1880.

HUNOLD. Chamberlain of the Burgundian kings, 10, etc.

HUNSLAND. Equivalent to Hungary, *passim*.

ICELAND (Isenland or Island). Brunhilda's country. Literally "the iron land," identical in name, if not in position, with the modern Iceland. *See* Adv. vi, 418, 550, 580. By some it is identified with Ysseland, the province of Upper Yssel.

- IRING (Irin). Described as a liegeman of Haward, a Danish lord living at Etzel's court, 1807, 2031, etc.
- IRNFRIED. A landgrave of Thuringia, at Etzel's court, 1804, 2031, 2070, etc.
- ISENSTEIN. Brunhilda's castle, 384.
- KIEF (Kiewe). A city in Russia, 1340.
- KRIEMHILDA (Kriemhilt). Daughter of Dankrat and Uté, 2, etc.
- LUDEGAST. King of Denmark, 140, etc.
- LUDEGER. Prince of Saxony, brother of Ludegast, 140, etc.
- LOCHHEIM (Loche). The place on the Rhine where the Nibelung Hoard was sunk, 1137.
- MEDLICK. Molk in Austria, 1328.
- MIESENBURG. Wieselburg on the Danube, 1377.
- MOERINGEN. A place on the Danube below Pfödingen, 1591.
- MAUTERN. In Austria, on the Danube, 1329.
- NANTWIN. Herrat's father, 1381.
- NIBELUNG. The first-mentioned possessor of the hoard, and of the sword Balmung. His sons were Nibelung and Schilbung, and his stronghold is located in Norway, 87, 739.
- NIBELUNGS. The sons of Nibelung and their men, 87, 580. The name afterwards seems to be applied to the possessors of the hoard and finally to the Burgundians, 617, 1523, 1715, 1726, 1737, 1900, 2379.
- NIBELUNG-LAND, 484, 524, 778.
- NUDUNG. Son of Gotelinda, described as slain by Witege, 1699, 1903, 1907, etc.
- ORTLIEB. The son of Etzel and Kriemhilda, killed by Hagen, 1388, 1913, 1961, etc.
- ORTWEIN, of Metz. Nephew of Hagen and high sewer to the Burgundian kings, 9, 11, 81, etc.
- PASSAU. A city on the Danube, 1296, 1627.
- PETSCHNEGEN. The name of a place or tribe (Pescenære) tributary to Etzel, 1340.
- PFOERING (Vergen). A place on the Danube below Ingoldstadt, 129.
- PILGERIN, or PILGRIM. A bishop of Passau, who is represented of the Burgundian kings and of Kriemhilda, 1428, 1628. Bishop of Passau of that name held the see from 971-991.

RAMUNG. A duke of Wallachia at Etzel's court, 1343, 1880.

RICHART. One of Dietrich's men, 2281.

RÜDEGER. Margrave of Bechelaren, 1147, 1630, etc.

RUMOLD. Kitchen-master to the Burgundian kings, 10, etc.

SANTEN, or Xanten. On the Lower Rhine, the dwelling-place of Siegmund 20, 708.

SCHILBUNG. One of the Nibelung brothers, 87, 721.

SCHWANEFELD. A district in Franconia, north of the Danube, 1525.

SCHWEMMELIN. A fiddler of King Etzel's, sent with Werbelin as envoy to Worms, 1374, 1412.

SCRUTAN. A knight at Etzel's court, 1880.

SIEGELIND (Sigelint). One of the mermaids encountered by Hagen, 1539.

SIEGESTAB. Dietrich's nephew, described as a duke from Bern, 2258, 2284, etc.

SIEGFRIED. Son of Siegmund, 21, etc. Also the name of the infant son of Gunther and Brunhild, 719.

SIEGLIND [Sigelint]. Wife of Siegmund, and mother of Siegfried, 20, etc.

SIEGMUND (Siegemunt). King of Netherland, father of Siegfried, 20, etc.

SINDOLD. Cup-bearer to the Burgundian kings, 10, 11.

SPESSART. A well-known forest in N.W. Bavaria, 967.

SPIRES. An aged bishop of that see is mentioned, 1508.

TARNHELM. The Hood of Invisibility taken by Siegfried from the Niblungs 97, 337.

THURINGIA, 1345, 1877.

TRAISEN. A river in Austria, upon which, at its confluence with the Danube stands Traisenmauer, the abode of Queen Helka, 1331, 1332.

TRONJÉ, or Troneg. The birth-place of Hagen, 9, etc.

TRAUN. A tributary of the Danube, 1304.

TULNA (Tuln). A town on the Danube, 1341, 1361.

UTÉ (Uote). Wife of Dankrat, and mother of the three kings and Kriemhild, 7, etc.

VASKE (Waske). The name of Iring's sword, 2051.

VASKE-ROCK (Waskensteine). A rock in the Vosges or *Waskenwalde*, 2344.

VOLKER, of Alsace. A vassal of the Burgundian kings, called "the Fiddler" from his skill in music, 9, etc., 1477, 1584, 1652, 1833, etc.

WALTHER, of Spain. A boy who was brought up as a hostage at Etzel's court, and afterwards fled with Hildegund, 1756, 1797, 2344.

WASKENWALDE. The Vosges, 911.

- WERBELIN. A fiddler or minstrel of King Etzel's; fellow-*envoy* with Schwammelin, 1374, 1413, 1964.
- WICHART. One of Dietrich's men, 2281, 2323.
- WITEGE. The slayer of Nudung, 1699.
- WOLFHART. One of Dietrich's men, nephew of Hildebrand, 1719, 1807, 2239, 2292, etc.
- WOLFBRAND. One of Dietrich's men, 2261, 2281, 2322, etc.
- WOLFWIN. One of Dietrich's men, 2259, 2278, 2322.
- ZAZEMANG (Zazamanc). A town, presumably in the east, famed for silk, 362.

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